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G. H. W. sculp.

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Gil Blas.*

Published by J. Newman, No. 11, Fleet Street, Nov. 23, 1780.



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THE
ADVENTURES

OF

Gil Blas of Santillane.

A NEW TRANSLATION,

By T. SMOLLETT, M. D.

AUTHOR OF RODERICK RANDOM.

VOL. VII.

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ADVERTISEMENTS

ON BLANK PAPER

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AND BOOK-KEEPING

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THE ADVENTURES

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GIL BLAS of Santillane.

[Continuation of BOOK X.]

CHAP. X.

What followed the marriage of Gil Blas and the fair Antonia. The beginning of Scipio's history.

ON the very next day after my marriage, the lords of Leyva returned to Valencia, after having given me a thousand new marks of friendship; so that my secretary and I remained in the house with our wives and servants only.

The care which both of us took to please the ladies, was not ineffectual; in a little time, I inspired my wife with as much love for me, as I had for her; and Scipio made his spouse forget the sorrows which he had made her suffer. Beatrice, who had a pliant, obliging temper, easily insinuated herself into the favour, and gained the confidence of her mistress. In short, we agreed, all four to admiration, and began to enjoy a situation worthy of envy. All our days glided away in the most agreeable amusements. Antonia was naturally grave, but Beatrice and I were very gay; and had we been otherwise, Scipio's presence was enough to keep off melancholly. He was an

A 3 incomparable

incomparable fellow for society, one of those comical creatures, whose appearance alone can make a company merry.

One day that we took a whim, after dinner, to go and take a siesto, in the most agreeable place of the wood, my secretary was in such good humour, that he banished all desire of sleeping, by his merry discourse. "Hold thy tongue, friend, (said I) or if thou art resolved to keep us from taking our nap, entertain us with some story worthy of our attention."

"With all my heart, Sir (answered he): shall I recount the history of king Pelagius*?" "I would rather hear thy own (I replied); but that is a pleasure thou hast not thought proper to give me, since we lived together, nor ever will, I suppose." "And what is the reason? (said he) if I have not recounted my own history, it was because you never expressed the least desire to hear it; it is not, therefore, my fault that you are ignorant of my adventures; and if you are in the least curious to know them, I am ready to satisfy your curiosity." Antonia, Beatrice and I took him at his word, and disposed ourselves in order, to hear his narration, which could not miss of having a good effect, either in diverting, or lulling us asleep.

"Had it depended upon me, (said Scipio) I should have been the son of some grandee, or knight of Alcantara, at least; but as one does not chuse his own father, you must know that mine was an honest soldier

* Pelagius, the first king of Leon, reigned in the eighth century: and he lived some time in subjection to the Saracens in Spain, but resolving to shake off the yoke of such barbarous tyranny, he put himself at the head of the christians who had fled for refuge to the Austrian mountains, and being declared king, took arms against the Infidels; whom having vanquished, in a bloody battle, he laid the foundation of the kingdom of Leon, in which he reigned twenty years.

dier of the holy brotherhood, Torribio Scipio by name. While he was travelling to and fro on the highway, where his profession obliged him, almost always, to be, he met by accident, one day, between Cuenca and Toledo, a young-gipsy, whom he thought very handsome. She was alone, on foot, and carried her whole fortune in a kind of knapsack on her back: "Which way do you go, my dear?" said he to her, softening his voice, which was naturally rough. "Signior cavalier, answered she, I am going to Toledo, where I hope to gain an honest livelihood, in some shape or other." "That is a laudable intention, he resumed, and I don't doubt that you have more strings than one to your bow." "Yes, thank God, said she, I have more talents than one; I can compose pomatums and essences for the ladies; I tell fortunes, turn the sieve to find things that are lost, and shew all that people want to see in a glass or mirrour."

Torribio, concluding that such a girl would be a very advantageous match for him, who could scarce live by his employment, though he was very dexterous at it, offered to marry her: she accepted the proposal, and they repaired with all diligence to Toledo, where they were wedded; and you see in me, the worthy fruit of these noble nuptials. They settled in the suburbs, where my mother began to sell pomatums and essences; but that trade not answering, she became fortune-teller. It was then that she saw the crowns and pistoles shower upon her; a thousand dupes of both sexes soon raised the reputation of Coscolina, which was the gypsie's name. Some body came every day, to beg she would employ her ministry for him: sometimes, a needy nephew, who wanted to know when his uncle, whose sole heir he was, would set out for the other world: and sometimes a girl, wishing to know, if a certain cavalier, to whom she had granted the favour, on promise of marriage, would keep his word.

Please to observe, that my mother's predictions were always favourable to those who solicited them: if they proved true, good and well; but when they came back to reproach her, because the contrary of what she had prophesied came to pass; she answered coldly, that they must attribute it to the dæmon, who, notwithstanding the force of the conjurations that she employed to make him reveal what would happen, was sometimes so malicious as to deceive her.

When my mother, for the honour of her profession, thought she must make the devil appear in her operations, Torribio Scipio always acted that part, which he performed perfectly well; the roughness of his voice, and ugliness of his face giving him an appearance suitable to the character which he represented. Those that were in the least timorous were always terrified by my father's figure. But one day, unfortunately, there came a brutal fellow of a captain to see the devil, whom he run through the body. The holy office, informed of the devil's death, sent its officers to the house of Coscolina, whom they seized with all her effects; and I, who was then but seven years old, was put into the hospital of * *Los Ninos*. There were in that house charitable clergymen, who, being well paid for the education of poor orphans, were at the trouble of teaching them to read and write. They looked upon me as a promising child, and, on that account, distinguished me from the rest, by chusing me to run on their errands. They sent me into the city with letters and messages; and I made the responses at mass. By way of recompence, they undertook to teach me the Latin tongue; but they behaved so rudely, and treated me with such rigour, notwithstanding the small services I did them, that, being no longer able to bear it, I ran away one morning early, when I was sent out on an errand; and, far from returning to the hospital, quitted Toledo by the suburbs that lie on the Seville side of the city.

Tho'

* *Los Ninos*, orphans, or rather boys.

Though I was scarce yet nine years old, I felt a sensible pleasure in being free, and master of my own actions. I was without money, and without food ; but what did that signify ? I had no lessons to study, nor themes to compose. After having walked about two hours, my little legs began to refuse their service : I had never before made such a long journey ; and I found myself obliged to halt, and give them some rest. I sat down under a tree, by the side of the road ; there, for my amusement, took my rudiments out of my pocket, and read it in sport ; then remembering the stripes and floggings which it had made me receive, I tore out the leaves, saying in great wrath ; “ Ah, dog of a book ! thou shalt never make me shed tears again.” While I thus glutted my revenge, strewing the ground about me with declensions and conjugations, a hermit passed by, with a white beard, large spectacles, and a venerable air. He came up to me ; and we examined each other with great eagerness. “ My little gentleman, said he smiling ; we seem to look at one another with great attention : I believe it would not be a bad scheme for us to live together in my hermitage, which is not two hundred yards from hence.” “ I am your humble servant answered I, hastily : I have no ambition to be an hermit.” The good old man laughed at this reply ; and embracing me, said, Don’t be frightened at my dress, my son ; though it is not agreeable, it is useful ; it makes me lord of a charming retreat, and of the neighbouring villages ; the inhabitants of which love, or rather idolize me. Come along with me, added he, and I will give you a jacket like this that I wear. If you chuse it, you shall share with me the sweets of my retired life ; and if you don’t like it, upon trial, you shall not only be at liberty to leave me, but you may be also assured, that I will not fail to give you a gratification at parting.” I suffered myself to be persuaded, and followed the old hermit, who asked me several questions ; to

which I answered with an ingenuity which I have not always preserved in the sequel. When we came to the hermitage, he presented to me some fruit, which I devoured, having eaten nothing the whole day but a morsel of dry bread, on which I had breakfasted in the morning at the hospital. The anchorite, seeing me make such good use of my jaws, said, "Courage, my child; don't spare the fruit; I have ample provision of it, thank God; and I did not bring thee hither to let thee starve." This was indeed very true; for in less than an hour after our arrival, he lighted a fire, spitted a leg of mutton: and, while I turned the spit, covered a small table with a very dirty napkin; upon which he laid two plates, one for himself, and another for me.

When the mutton was ready, he took it off the spit, and cut some slices for our supper, which was not a dry meal; for we drank excellent wine, of which also he had good store. "Well, my chicken (said he, when we had done eating) art thou satisfied with my ordinary? This is the manner in which thou wilt be treated every day, if thou livest with me. Besides, thou shalt do what thou plearest in this hermitage. All that I exact of thee, is, to accompany me when I go a-begging through the neighbouring villages; and lead an ass with two panniers, which the charitable peasants usually fill with eggs, bread, flesh and fish. This is all I require of thee." "I will do every thing you desire, I replied, provided you don't oblige me to learn Latin." Brother Chrosotom (that was the old hermit's name) could not help laughing at my simplicity, and assured me anew, that he did not intend to force my inclination.

We went a-begging the very next day with the ass, which I led by the halter, and reaped a plentiful harvest; every peasant being glad of an opportunity to put something in our panniers: one threw in a whole loaf; another, a large piece of bacon; a third, a partridge; in short, we brought home victuals enough

enough for eight days ; a circumstance that denotes the great friendship and esteem that the country people had for the hermit. It is true, he was of great use to them, in giving them his advice when they came to consult him, in re-establishing peace in families where discord reigned, in marrying their daughters, in furnishing them with remedies for a thousand sorts of diseases, and teaching prayers proper for barren women, who wished to have children.

By what I have said, you see that I was well fed in my hermitage : I was as well accommodated in point of sleeping ; stretched upon good fresh straw, with a cushion of coarse cloth under my head, and a covering of the same stuff over my body, I made but one nap, which lasted all night long. Brother Chrystom, who had promised to give me a hermit's garb, made one for me from an old robe that he used to wear, and called me little brother Scipio. As soon as I appeared in the villages, in that regular habit, I was thought so handsome, that the ass was better loaded than formerly : the business was, who should give most to the little brother, with whose figure they were so well pleased.

The easy idle life which I led with the old hermit, could not be disagreeable to a boy of my age ; accordingly, I liked it so well, that I should have continued there still, if the Fates had not spun for me days of a very different kind ; but the destiny which I was bound to fulfil, soon detached me from idleness, and made me quit brother Chrystom, as you shall hear. I frequently perceived the old man at work upon the cushion that served him for a pillow ; he did nothing but sew and unsew it ; and I observed one day, that he put money into it. This remark was attended by a curiosity which I proposed to gratify the very first journey he should take to Toledo, whither he was wont to go once a week. I waited impatiently for the day, without having as yet any other design than of satisfying my curiosity. At length the old man set

out, and I ript up his pillow, where I found among the wool with which it was filled, the value of about fifty crowns in different sorts of coin.

This treasure, in all probability, was the gratitude of the country people, whom the hermit had cured by his remedies, and of the women who had been blessed with children, by virtue of his prayers. Be this as it will, I no sooner saw that it was money, which I could appropriate to myself with impunity, than my Egyptian disposition prevailed. I was seized with a desire of stealing it, which can be attributed to nothing but the force of that blood which circulated in my veins. I yielded to the temptation without resistance, secured the money in a kind of bag where we kept our combs and night caps; then quitting my hermit's habit, and resuming that of the orphan, I ran away from the hermitage, believing that I carried off in my bag the whole riches of the Indies.

You have heard my beginning (continued Scipio), and I don't doubt that you expect a train of facts of the same nature; your expectation will not be deceived; I have many more such exploits to recount, before I come to my laudable actions; but I will come to them at last; and you will see, by my narration, that a rogue may very well turn an honest man.

Child as I was, I was not fool enough to return to Toledo; that would have been exposing me to the chance of meeting brother Chrysolom, who would have made me restore my treasure in a very disagreeable manner. I followed another road, which conducted me to the village of Galves, where I stopped at an inn, the landlady of which was a widow of forty, who had all the qualities requisite for turning the penny. This woman no sooner cast her eyes upon me, than judging, by my dress, that I was a fugitive from the orphan hospital, she asked who I was, and whether I went? I answered, that having lost both father and mother, I wanted to go to service. "Child (said she), canst thou read?" I assured her, that I

both

both read and wrote to admiration. Indeed, I could form my letters, and join them in such a manner, as somewhat resembled writing; and that is enough for the occasion of a village tavern. "I take thee into my service (said the landlady) thou wilt not be altogether uselefs, but shall keep an account of all my debts active and passive. I will give thee no wages, (added she) because the good company that come here never forget the servants; so that thou mayst depend upon receiving good perquisites."

I accepted the proposal, reserving to myself, as you may well believe, the right of changing the air, as soon as my stay at Galves should become disagreeable. When I found myself engaged in the service of this inn, I became very uneasy in my mind: I did not desire to be thought a monied-man; and was very anxious to know where I should conceal my hoard, so as that it should be secure from every stranger's hand. I did not as yet know the house well enough, to trust to those places which seemed most proper to secure it. With what perplexities are riches attended! I determined, however, to put my bag in a corner of our corn loft where there was straw; and believing it more safe there, than in any other place, made myself as easy as possible. There were three servants in this house, a fat hostler, a young maid of Galicia, and myself: each of us drew as much as we could from the travellers that halted, whether they came on horseback or a foot. I commonly caught some halfpence of these gentlemen, when I brought in the bill; they gave something also to the hostler, for taking care of their beasts: but as for the Galician, who was the idol of all the carriers that passed, she got as many crowns as we did farthings. Every penny that I received, I carried to increase my treasure to the corn-loft; and the more I saw my wealth increase, the more did I feel my little heart attached to it: I sometimes kissed the species, and contemplated the

the different pieces with a degree of rapture which none but misers can conceive.

This affection for my treasure obliged me to go and visit it thirty times a day: I frequently met the landlady upon the stair; and she being naturally distrustful, was curious one day, to know what it was that could bring me every moment to the corn loft. Thither therefore she went, and searched every corner, imagining that I, perhaps, concealed in that place some things which I had stole in the house. She did not forget to remove the straw that covered my bag, which having found, she opened it; and seeing crowns and pistoles appear, believed, or pretended to believe, that I had stolen them from her. She seized the sum total accordingly, then, calling me little wretch, and little rascal, ordered the hostler, who was intirely devoted to her will, to give me fifty good lashes, which when I had received, she turned me out of doors, saying that she would suffer no knave to live in her house. In vain did I protest that I had not robbed the landlady: she maintained the contrary; and of course her word was believed rather than mine. Thus, brother Chrysofome's money passed from one thief to another.

I lamented the loss of my money, as a man mourns the death of an only child; and though my tears did not retrieve what I had lost, at least they excited the compassion of some people who saw them shed; and, among others, of the curate of Galves, who was passing by chance. He seemed moved at my melancholy condition, and carried me along with him to the parsonage; where, in order to gain my confidence, or rather to pump me, he began by pitying my situation. "How much (said he) does this poor child deserve compassion! It is not surprizing, if, abandoned to himself in such a tender age, he has committed a bad action. Most men find it difficult to live honest through the whole course of their lives." Then, addressing himself to me, "My son (added he) from

from what part of Spain do you come, and who are your parents? You seem to be of some good family. Tell me ingeniously, and be assured that I will not abandon you."

The curate, by this politic and charitable discourse, engaged me insensibly to discover all my affairs with great sincerity. I made a general confession. After which he said, "Friend, though it does not become hermits to hoard up money, that does not lessen your crime; in robbing brother Chrysostom, you have transgressed that article of the decalogue which forbids theft: but the landlady shall restore the money, which I will send to the hermit; so that your conscience may be easy on that score." But this, I swear, was the least of my uneasiness. This curate, who had a design of his own, did not stop there: "My child, said he, I interest myself in your behalf, and will procure a good place for you. I will to-morrow send you by a carrier to my nephew, who is a canon of the cathedral of Toledo: he will not refuse, at my request, to receive you in the number of his lacqueys, who live plentifully, like so many incumbents, on the revenue of his prebend; you will be perfectly well situated, I can assure you."

I was so much consoled by this assurance, that I no longer thought of the bag, nor the stripes which I had received, my mind being wholly possessed with the pleasure of living like an incumbent. Next day, while I was at breakfast, a carrier came to the parsonage, according to the curate's orders, with two mules bridled and saddled. I was helped on the one, the carrier mounted the other, and we set out for Toledo. My fellow-traveller was a fellow of humour, who liked nothing better than to make himself merry at another's expence. "My little junior, said he, you have a good friend in the curate of Galves: he could not give you a better proof of his affection, than that of recommending you to the service of his nephew the canon, whom I have the honour to know,

and who is, without contradiction, the pearl of the whole chapter. He is none of those devotees whose pale and meagre faces preach up mortification. He has a capacious countenance, a rosy complexion, a merry look, is a jovial soul, who enjoys the present hour, and in particular loves good cheer. You will live in his house like a little a prince."

The rogue of a carrier perceiving that I listened with great satisfaction, continued to extol the happiness I should enjoy in the canon's service; and did not leave off speaking, until we arrived at the village of Obisa, where we stopt a little to bait our mules. The carrier, while he walked about in the inn, let fall by accident, out of his pocket, a paper, which I was cunning enough to pick up, without being observed, and which I found means to read while he was in the stable. It was a letter directed to the priests of the orphan hospital, and conceived in these terms:

"Gentlemen, I thought I was bound in charity to send back to you a little knave, who is a run-away from your hospital. He does not seem to want capacity, but deserves to be carefully mewed up; and I hope, that by proper correction he will in time do well. That God may preserve your pious and charitable worships, is the prayer of

The Curate of Galves."

When I had read this letter, which informed me of the curate's good intentions, I did not long hesitate. To leave the inn, and gain the banks of the Tagus, which was more than a league from thence, was the work of a moment. Fear lent me wings to fly from the priests of the orphan hospital, to whom I would by no means return, so much was I disgusted with their manner of teaching the Latin tongue. I entered Toledo

as gaily as if I had known where to board. True, it is a city of benediction, in which a man of genius, reduced to the necessity of living at his neighbour's expence, cannot die of hunger. Scarce had I arrived in the market-place, when a well-dressed cavalier, whom I passed, laid hold of my arm, and said, "Harkee, my boy, will you serve me? I should be glad to have such a lacquey as you." "And I should be glad (answered I) to have such a master as you." "If that be the case (he resumed) thou art mine from this moment. Follow me." This I did, without making any further reply.

This cavalier, who might be about thirty years of age, and was called Don Abel, lodged in a house, where he possessed a very handsome apartment. He was by profession a gamester, and we lived together in this manner: in the morning, I cut as much tobacco for him, as would fill five or six pipes, brushed his cloaths, and went for the barber to shave him, and dress his whiskers. After which, he went out, and made a tour among the tennis courts, from whence he returned about eleven or twelve o'clock at night. But each morning before he went out, he gave me three royals for my day's expence, leaving me at liberty to do what I would, until ten o'clock at night. He was very well satisfied with me, provided he found me at home when he returned. He ordered a doublet and hose of livery to be made for me, so that I looked like the page of a lady of the town. I was very well satisfied with my place, and certainly I could not have found one more agreeable to my humour.

I had led this happy life almost a whole month, when my master asked if I was pleased with his behaviour. I answered, that I could not be more so. "Well then (he resumed) we shall set out to-morrow for Seville, whither my affairs call me. Thou wilt not be sorry to see that capital of Andalusia.

The ADVENTURES of

He that hath not Seville seen,
 (saith the proverb)
 Is no traveller, I ween."

I assured him, that I was ready to follow him whithersoever he should go. That very day the Seville carrier came to his lodging, to fetch a large coffer that contained all his moveables : and in the morning we set out for Andalusia.

Signior Don Abel was so lucky at play, that he never lost, except when he chose to lose. This talent often obliged him to change his habitation, that he might avoid the resentment of dupes ; and this was the cause of our present journey. Being arrived at Seville, we took lodgings near the gate of Cordova, and began to live as we had lived at Toledo : but my master found a difference between those two cities. In the tennis court of Seville, he met with gamesters who played as successfully as he, so that he came home sometimes very much out of humour. One morning, being chagrined at losing an hundred pistoles, which he ventured the preceeding day, he asked why I had not carried his dirty linnen to a woman whom he employed to wash and perfume it. I answered, that I had forgot. Upon which, falling into a passion, he gave me half-a-dozen boxes on the face, so rudely, that he made me see more candles than ever burnt in Solomon's temple. " There, little wretch, said he, there is something to make you mind your business. Must I be always at your tail, to tell you what you have to do ? why are you not as ready to work as to eat ? are you such a beast, as to be incapable of anticipating my orders and occasions ? " So saying, he went out of his apartment, leaving me very much mortified at the blows I had received for such a slight fault. I don't know what adventure happened to him soon after in the tennis-court, but one evening he came home very much heated, and said, " Scipio, I am resolved to go to Italy,

Italy, and must embark the day after to-morrow, in a ship bound for Genoa. I have my own reasons for making that voyage; wilt thou not accompany me, and lay hold of such a fair occasion to see the most delightful country in the world?" I said I would, but at the same time proposed to disappear just when he intended to embark. I thought I would revenge myself of him in this manner, and was very well pleased with the scheme, which I could not help imparting to a professed bravo whom I met in the street; for since my arrival at Seville, I had contracted some bad acquaintances, and this in particular. I told him in what manner, and for what I had been buffeted, then communicated my design of leaving Don Abel when he should be just ready to go on board, and asked his opinion of my resolution.

The bravo frowned while he listened to me, and twined the curls of his mustachio; then blaming my master with an air of gravity: "Little gentleman, said he, you are dishonoured for ever, if you restrict yourself to that frivolous revenge which you have hatched. It is not enough to let Don Abel depart by himself; that it would not be punishment sufficient. The chastisement must be proportioned to the injury. Let us therefore carry off his goods and money, which we will share like brothers after he is gone." Although I was naturally inclined to thieving, I was frightened at the proposal of such an important robbery. Nevertheless, the arch rogue who made it, did not fail to persuade me to it; and you shall hear the success of our enterprize. The bravo, who was a big strong fellow, came to our lodgings next day in the twilight, when I shewed him the coffer in which my master had already secured his effects, and asked if he could carry such a weight. "Such a weight! (said he) know, that when the business is to carry off the goods of another, I can lift Noah's ark." So saying, he flung the coffer on his shoulders with ease, and went down stairs with it upon tip-toes. I fol-

lowed him with some caution, and we were just going out at the street-door, when Don Abel, brought thither so seasonably by his good genius, appeared all of a sudden.

“Where art thou going with the coffer?” (said he) I was so confounded, that I stood silent, and the bravo seeing the affair misgive, threw down his load, and betook himself to flight, in order to avoid explanations. “Where art thou going with the coffer?” (said my master for the second time) “Sir, (answered I, more dead than alive) I am going to carry it on board of the ship in which you are to embark for Italy.” “Ha! he replied, dost thou know in what ship I intended to sail?” “No, Sir, said I, but I have a tongue in my head, and I should have enquired at the harbour, where somebody would have certainly told me.” At this my answer, which he suspected, he darted such a furious look at me, that I was afraid of a second beating. “Who ordered you, cried he, to bring my coffer out of the house?” “You yourself, said I. Don’t you remember how you upbraided me some days ago? Did not you say, while you beat me, that you expected I would prevent your orders, and do what was proper for your service of my own accord? Now, it was in consequence of this direction, that I employed one to carry your coffer to the ship.” The gamester observing, that I was more mischievous than he imagined, dismissed me immediately, saying, with an air of indifference, “Go, Mr. Scipio, and heaven be your guide. I don’t choose to play with people who have sometimes a card too many, sometimes one too few. Get out of my sight, added he, in another tone, lest I make you sing without your gamut.” I saved him the trouble of repeating his commands, and got off in a twinkling, being wondrously afraid that he would strip me of my clothes, which, however, he luckily spared. I walked along the street, considering where I could lie, with my two eyals, which constituted my whole stock. I arrived

at the gate of the archbishop's palace; and as his grace's supper was then dressing, an agreeable flavour issued from the kitchen, and diffused itself a whole league around. "Zooks, said I to myself, I should like to dispatch one of those ragouts which salute my nose. I should even be contented with an opportunity of dipping my four fingers and thumb in it. What! can't I fall upon some method of tasting these dainties that smell so agreeably? the thing does not seem impossible. I whetted my imagination accordingly, and, by dint of musing, hatched a trick, which I immediately put in practice, and which succeeded to my wish. I entered the court of the palace, and running towards the kitchen, cried as loud as I could, Help! help! as if I had been pursued by some assassin.

At my repeated cries, Mr. Diego, the archbishop's cook, with two or three scullions, came running out to know the cause; and seeing nobody but me, asked "why I made such a noise." "Ah! Sir, said I, pretending to be frightened almost out of my wits, for the love of St. Polycarp, pray save me from the fury of a person that wants to kill me." "Where is this bravo?" cried Diego; you are quite alone, without so much as a cat at your heels. Go, my child, lay aside your fears. It was probably some body who wanted to terrify you for his diversion, and who did well not to follow you into this palace; for, if he had, we should have cut off his ears." "No, no, said I to the cook, he did not pursue me for his diversion. He is a big, ill-looking fellow, who intends to strip me, and waits hard by in the street to catch me as I go out." "He shall wait a long time then, he replied, for you shall stay here till to-morrow, and want for neither supper nor bed."

I was transported with joy when I heard these words; and it was a ravishing sight to me, when, being conducted into the kitchen by Mr. Diego, I beheld the preparations for his grace's supper. I reckoned

oned fifteen persons at work, but I could not number the dishes that I saw, so careful had providence been in behalf of the archbishop. It was then, that feasting upon the steams of the ragouts, which I had only smelled afar off before, I became acquainted with sensuality. I had the honour to sup and sleep with the scullions, whose friendship I gained to that degree, that next day, when I went to thank Mr. Diego for the asylum he had so generously afforded, he said, "Our kitchen-lads tell me, they would be glad to have you for a comrade, they like your humour so well: would you choose to be their companion?" I answered, "That if I enjoyed that piece of good fortune, I should think myself perfectly happy." "If that be the case, my friend, said he, look upon yourself, from this moment, as an officer of the palace." So saying, he went and presented me to the majordomo, who, on account of my sprightly look, judged me worthy to be received among the turn-spits."

I was no sooner in possession of such an honourable employment, than Mr. Diego, according to the custom of cooks in great families, who privately send victuals to their mistresses, chose me to carry to a certain lady in the neighbourhood sometimes loins of veal, and sometimes fowl or venison. This good lady was a widow, scarce turned of thirty, very handsome, very smart, and, to all appearance, not over faithful to her cook, who not only furnished her with victuals, bread, sugar and oil, but also provided her in good wine, all at the expence of the archbishop.

I was effectually improved in the palace of his grace, where I played a very pleasant prank, which is still spoken of at Seville. The pages, and some other domestics, in order to celebrate their master's birth day, took it in their heads, to represent a comedy. They chose that of the *Benavides**; and as they had occasion

* Benavides, the surname of a noble family in Spain, descended from Alonso the Ninth, king of Castile.

for a boy of my age, to play the part of the young king of Leon, they cast their eyes upon me. The major-domo, who piqued himself upon his talent of declamation, undertook to instruct me, and after he had given me a few lessons assured them, that I would not be the worst actor in the play. As our master was at the expence of the entertainment, no cost was spared to render it magnificent. A theatre was built in the largest hall of the palace, and decorated with great taste. There was a bed of turf made in the back scene, on which I was to appear asleep, and the Moors fall upon me to make me prisoner. When the actors were perfect in their parts, the archbishop fixed the day for the representation, and did not fail to invite the most considerable noblemen and ladies of the city to come and see it. The day being come, each actor was busied with his dress. As for mine, it was brought to me by a taylor, accompanied by our major-domo; who, having been at the trouble of teaching me my part, was also pleased to superintend my dress. The taylor cloathed me with a rich velvet robe, trimmed with gold-lace and buttons, with hanging sleeves adorned with fringe of the same metal; and the major-domo himself placed upon my head a crown of paper, powdered with a quantity of fine pearls, intermixed with false stones. Besides, they girded me with a sash of pink-coloured silk, wrought with silver flowers; and every thing they said to me, seemed to lend me wings to run away with the plunder. At length the play began about twilight. I opened the scene, by pronouncing some verses, importing, that being unable to keep myself awake, I was going to abandon myself to slumber; at the same time, I withdrew, and laid down on the bed of turf which had been prepared for me; but instead of falling asleep, I began to consider how I could get into the street, and escape with my royal robes. A little private stair that let down under the theatre, into the hall, seemed proper for the execution of my design.

I ac-

I accordingly got up nimbly, and seeing that no body took notice of me, slipt down that stair which conducted me into the hall, the door of which I gained, crying, "Room, room, I am going to change my dress." Every one made way for me, so that in less than two minutes I got out of the palace with impunity, and by favour of the night, repaired to the house of a bravo of my acquaintance.

He was perfectly astonished to see me in that garb; and when I imparted the affair, he laughed until he was ready to burst; then embracing me with so much the more joy, as he flattered himself with the hope of sharing the spoils of the king of Leon, he congratulated me on having performed such a fine stroke, and told me, that if I went on at that rate, my genius would one day make a great noise in the world. After we had sufficiently made ourselves merry, "What shall we do with this rich dress?" (said I to the bravo) who answered, "Give yourself no further trouble on that score. I know an honest broker, who, without expressing the least curiosity, buys every thing that is brought to him, provided he likes the bargain; tomorrow morning I will go and bring him hither." In effect, the bravo went out next day early, leaving me a-bed in his room, and in two hours returned with the broker, who carried a yellow bag under his arm. "Friend, said he to me, this is Signior Ybaguez de Segovia, who, in spite of the bad example shewn by his brethren of the trade, deals with the most scrupulous integrity. He will tell you to a farthing the value of this dress that you want to part with, and you may depend upon his estimation." "Yes, certainly, said the broker, I must be a wretch indeed, if I prized a thing under the true value. That is a crime with which I never was taxed, thank God, and no man shall ever lay it to the charge of Ybaguez de Segovia. Let us see the goods you want to sell, and I will conscientiously tell you what they are worth." "Here they are, said the bravo, shewing them, and you must allow

allow, that nothing can be more magnificent : observe the beauty of that Genoa velvet, and the richness of the trimming." " I am quite charmed with it ! replied the broker, after he had viewed it attentively, nothing can be finer." " And what do you think of the pearls of this crown ?" (resumed my friend) " If they were more round (said Ybagnez) they would be inestimable : however, such as they are, I think them very pretty, and like them as well as the rest of the dress. I sincerely own it (continued he) another rogue of a broker in my place would pretend to despise the merchandize, that he might have it cheap, and would not be ashamed of offering twenty pistoles for it ; but I, who have some conscience, will give forty."

If Ybagnez had said an hundred, he would not then have been a just appraiser ; since the pearls, alone, were well worth two hundred crowns. The bravo, who had a fellow-feeling with him, said to me, " You see how fortunate you are in falling into the hands of an honest man. Signior Ybagnez prizes every thing as if he was upon his death bed." " That's true, said the broker, and therefore I never rise or fall a farthing in my price. Well, added he, is it a bargain ? Shall I count the money to you ?" " Stay, replied the bravo, my friend must first try on his suit of clothes, which I desired you to bring for him. I am mistaken if they won't fit him exactly." Then the broker, untying his bundle, shewed me a doublet and hose, of a very good dark coloured cloth, with silver buttons ; the whole seemingly half worn. I got up to try this dress, which, though both too long and too wide, appeared to these gentlemen, to have been made on purpose for me. Ybagnez rated it at ten pistoles ; and as he never abated one farthing of what he asked, we were obliged to comply with his valuation. So he took thirty pistoles out of his purse, and spread them upon the table ; after which, he made another bundle of my crown and royal robes, which he carried off accordingly.

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When he was gone, the bravo said, " I am very well satisfied with this broker." And good reason he had to be so: for, I am sure, he gave him one hundred pistoles, at least, by way of gratification. But he was not contented with that sum: he took, without ceremony, the half of the money that lay on the table, leaving the other half to me, and saying, " My dear Scipio, with these fifteen pistoles that remain, I advise you to quit this city forthwith: for, you may be assured that the archbishop will give orders to search for you every where. I should be extremely mortified, if, after having signalized yourself by an action, which will do honour to your history, you should foolishly suffer yourself to be apprehended." I answered, that I was fully resolved to leave Seville; and, in effect, after having bought a hat and some shirts, I gained the vast and delightful plain that stretches among vines and olives, to the ancient city of Carmona, and, three days after, arrived at Cordova*.

I lodged at an inn, as you enter the great square where the merchants live; and gave myself out for the son of a good family at Toledo, who travelled for my pleasure. I was well enough cloathed to make people believe this story, and the landlord was finally convinced, by the sight of some pistoles, which I let

* Cordova, the ancient Corduba, a city of Andalusia, upon the banks of the Guadalquivir: formerly the residence of the Moorish kings. It is famous for having given birth to the two Seneca's, the poet Lucan, the great general Gonzales, and many more persons of note. The cathedral was heretofore a mosque, built by the Moors, after the model of Solomon's temple; and reckoned almost equal to that of Mecca, in beauty and magnificence, being supported by a vast number of marble columns. This city is also famous for the martyrdom of many saints, who were inhumanly butchered by the infidels.

him

him see, as if by chance. It is probable, indeed, that my tender years made him believe I was some little libertine, who had run away from his parents, after having robbed them. Be this as it will, he did not seem curious to know more than what I told him of the matter: being in all likelihood afraid that his curiosity might make me change my lodging. For six royals a day, I lived very well in this inn, which was frequented by a good deal of company; there being at supper in the evening, no less than twelve people at one table. It was very diverting to see every one eating, without speaking a syllable, except one man, who talking incessantly, at random, compensated for the silence of the rest, by his impertinent prating. He affected the wit, told stories, and endeavoured, by quaint sayings, to entertain the company, who, from time to time, laughed heartily, though not so much at the brightness of his sallies, as at his ridiculous behaviour.

As for my part, I paid so little attention to the discourse of this original, that I should have risen from supper, without being able to give any account of what he said, had he not found means to interest me in his conversation. "Gentlemen," said he, towards the end of the meal, I have kept for the desert, a most diverting story; an adventure that befel a few days ago, at the palace of the archbishop of Seville. I had it from a batchelor of my acquaintance, who told me that he was present when it happened." These words discomposed me a good deal; I did not doubt but that it was my adventure, which he intended to recount: and I was not mistaken. This person gave a faithful detail of it, and even informed me of what I did not know; that is, what happened in the hall after my departure: and this you shall hear.

Scarce had I betook myself to flight, when the Moors, who, according to the performance which was represented, were to carry me off, appeared on the stage, with a design to surprize me on the bed o
tuff

turf, where they thought I was asleep; but when they went to seize the king of Leon, they were very much astonished to find neither king nor knave. The play was immediately interrupted; all the actors were perplexed; some called me, others searched for me, one halloo'd, and another cursed me. The archbishop perceiving the trouble and confusion that reigned behind the scenes, asked what was the matter. A page, who acted the Gracioso of the piece, hearing the prelate's voice, came out, and said to his grace: "My lord, you need not fear that the Moors will take the king of Leon prisoner; he has escaped with his royal robes." "Heaven be praised, cried the archbishop, he was very much in the right, to fly from the enemies of our religion, and escape the chains which they had prepared for him. He has, doubtless, returned towards Leon, the capital of his kingdom; and I wish he may get home, without meeting with any bad accident. Let no man go in pursuit of him, for I should be sorry if his majesty received any mortification from me." The prelate having spoke in this manner, ordered my part to be read, and the play to go on

C H A P. XI.

The sequel of Scipio's History.

AS long as my money lasted, the landlord treated me with great respect; but no sooner did he perceive that my finances were exhausted, than he looked cool upon me, picked a quarrel, and one morning early, desired me to leave his house. I quitted it with disdain, and went into a church belonging to the Dominicans, where, while I heard mass, an old Mendicant came and asked alms of me. I took two or three maravedis out of my pocket, and giving them to him, said, "Friend, pray to God to send me some good place: if your prayer is heard, you shall not repent of your devotion, and may depend upon my gratitude."

At these words the beggar viewed me very attentively, and answered me with a serious air; "What post would you have?" "I could wish, said I, to be a lacquey in some good family." He then asked if my occasions were pressing. They cannot be more so, I resumed: for, if I have not the good fortune of being settled very soon, there is no medium; I must either die of hunger, or betake myself to your trade." "If you are reduced to such necessity, said he, you, who are not at all calculated for our business, must be in a very disagreeable situation: but were you in the least accustomed to our way of life, you would prefer it to servitude, which is, without contradiction, inferior to beggary. Nevertheless, since you choose to be a servant, rather than to live a free and independent life, as I do, you shall have a master immediately. Notwithstanding my appearance, I can be of use to you: therefore, come hither to-morrow, at the same hour."

Resolved to be punctual, I returned next day to the same place, where I had not been long, before the Mendicant, coming up to me, bid me take the trouble to follow him. I did so; he conducted me to a cellar not far from the church; and this was the place of his residence. We entered his habitation; and sitting down upon a bench, which was at least an hundred years old, he spoke to me in this manner: "A good action, as the proverb says, always finds its recompence: you gave me charity yesterday, and that determines me to procure a place for you; and this, please God, I will soon perform. I am acquainted with an old Dominican, called Father Alexis, who is an holy ecclesiastic, and great confessor. I have the honour to run his errands, and acquit myself in that employment with so much fidelity and discretion, that he never refuses to use his interest for me and my friends. I have spoke to him of you in such a manner, that he is disposed to do you service; and I will present you to his reverence whenever you please."

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"There is not a moment to lose, said I to the old beggar, let us go instantly to the good friar." The mendicant consented, and carried me forthwith to father Alexis, whom we found in his room, busy in writing spiritual letters. He interrupted his work to speak to me, and told me, that at the request of the mendicant, he would interest himself in my behalf.

Having been informed (added he) that Signior Balthazar Velasques wanted a lacquey, I wrote this morning in your favour: and he has answered, that he will receive you implicitly, on my recommendation. You may, this very day, go to him from me; he is my penitent, and friend." The monk, on this occasion, exhorted me, during three quarters of an hour, to do my duty with fidelity and diligence. He enlarged particularly on the obligation I was under to serve Velasquez with zeal: after which, he assured me, that he would take care to maintain me in my post provided my master be pleased with my behaviour. Having thanked the monk for his generosity, I came out of the convent with the beggar; who told me, that Signior Balthazar Velasquez was an old rich wollen-drapeer, of great meekness and simplicity. "I dare say, (added he) that thou wilt be perfectly happy in his family." I enquired whereabouts the citizen lived, and went immediately to his house, after having promised to make an acknowledgement to the beggar, as soon as I should take root in my place. I entered a large shop, where two well-dressed apprentices were walking to and fro, in expectation of customers; and asking if their master was at home, told them, I had a message to him from father Alexis. At the mention of that venerable name, I was shewn into the back-shop, where the merchant sat at a bureau, turning over the leaves of a large day-book. I saluted him with great respect, saying, while I advanced, Signior, I am the young man whom the reverend father Alexis recommended to you for a lacquey." "Ha! welcome, my child (said he):
that

that holy man's recommendation is sufficient. I receive thee into my service, in preference to three or four lacqueys that were sent by other people. It is agreed: thy wages run up from this day forward."

I had not long served this citizen, before I perceived him to be just such a man as the beggar had described. His simplicity seemed even so great, that I could not help thinking I should find some difficulty in abstaining from playing him some trick or other. He had been a widower four years, and had two children, a son turned of five-and-twenty, and a daughter going in her fifteenth year, who being brought up by a severe duenna, and directed by father Alexis, walked in the path of virtue: but Gaspard Velsquez her brother, though nothing had been spared in his education, had all the vices of a young spendthrift. He sometimes laid two or three nights abroad; and if at his return his father took it into his head to reprimand him, Gaspard imposed silence upon him in a tone still higher than that of the old man.

"Scipio (said the draper to me one day) I have a son who is the sole plague of my life; he is plunged in all manner of debauchery: a circumstance that surprizes me very much; for his education was by no means neglected. I gave him good masters, and my friend Alexis hath done his utmost endeavour to put him in the right road; but he could not succeed: Gaspard is fallen into a state of libertinism. Thou wilt say, perhaps, that I treated him too gently in the beginning of his youth; and that he was undone by my indulgence: but that was not the case; he was always chastised when I thought he deserved to be used with rigour; for, good-natured as I am, I have resolution enough, when there is occasion for it. I have even ordered him to be confined, and the consequence was, he became more wicked than ever. In a word, he has one of those bad dispositions, which cannot be improved by good example, remon-

remonstrances, or chastisement. Heaven alone can work that miracle."

If I was not much moved at the sorrow of this unhappy father, at least I pretended to be so. "How much are you to be pitied, Sir! (said I); a good man like you deserves to have a much better son." "Heaven, my child, answered he, is pleased to deprive me of that consolation. Among other causes which Gaspard gives me to complain of him, added he, I will tell thee in confidence, there is one that makes me very uneasy; that is, the inclination which he has to rob me, and which he but too often finds means to satisfy, in spite of all my vigilance. The lacquey whom you succeed was in concert with him, and for that reason turned away. As for thee, I hope thou wilt not suffer thyself to be corrupted by my son; but espouse my interest, as father Alexis has, doubtless exhorted thee." "That I'll answer for (said I): his reverence exhorted me a whole hour, to have nothing in view but your advantage: but I can assure you, I had no need of being exhorted to that: I feel myself disposed to serve you faithfully, and my zeal will prove itself on all occasions."

He who hears one side only, hears nothing. Young Velasquez, who was a devilish beau, judging by my physiognomy, that I would be as easily seduced as my predecessor, took me aside into a private place, and spoke to me in these terms: "Harkee, my dear, I am persuaded that my father has charged thee to be a spy upon my actions: take care of thyself; I give thee notice beforehand, that thy employment is none of the most agreeable. If ever I perceive, that thou makest thy remarks upon me, I will cudgel thee to death; whereas, if thou wilt assist me in cheating my father, thou mayest depend upon my gratitude. Must I be more plain with you: Thou shalt have a share of the purchase. Make thy choice therefore, and declare this instant either for the father or son; for I will admit of no neutrality."

"Sir,

"Sir (answered I) you are very short with me; and I plainly perceive that I cannot help espousing your cause, though, in my heart, I feel a reluctance to betray Signior Velasquez." "Thou oughtst to make no scruple in so doing (replied Gaspard); he is an old miser, who wants to keep me still in leading-strings; a wretch who denies me the necessaries of life, in refusing to furnish me with money for my pleasures; for pleasures are the necessaries of life, at the age of five-and-twenty: thou must therefore look upon my father in that point of view." "Enough, Sir, (said I) there is no such thing as holding out against so just a cause of complaint. I offer my service, to second you in your laudable undertakings; but let us conceal our mutual intelligence, that your faithful associate may not be turned out of doors. You will do well, methinks, in affecting to hate me: speak roughly to me before people, and do not spare ill language; even some boxes on the ear, and kicks on the breech, will not be amiss: on the contrary, the more marks of aversion you bestow upon me, the more confidence will Balthazar have in my integrity. As for my part, I will pretend to avoid your conversation: in serving you at table, I will seem to acquit myself with regret; and when I talk of you to the apprentices, don't take it ill, that I rail at you with great bitterness."

"Egad! (cried Velasquez, hearing my last words) I admire thy genius, my friend. Thou shewest, at thy age, an astonishing capacity for intrigue, from whence I conceive the most happy presage; for I hope, with thy assistance, I shall not leave my father one single pistole." "You do me a great honour, said I, in depending so much on my industry: I will do my utmost endeavour to justify the good opinion you have of my understanding; and if I fail, at least it shall not be my fault."

It was not long before I let Gaspard see that I was actually the man he wanted; and this is the first

service I did him : Balthazar's strong box stood in his chamber, just by his bed-side, and served him instead of a pew for prayer. Every time I looked at it my eye-sight was regaled ; and I frequently said to myself ; " Friend Strong-box, must thou be always locked to me ? Shall I never have the pleasure of contemplating thy contents ? " As I went whenever I pleased into this chamber, which was forbid to nobody but Gaspard, I happened one day to perceive his father, who thinking himself unobserved, after having opened and locked his strong box concealed the key behind a hanging. I marked the place well, and imparted my discovery to my young master, who embraced me with joy, saying, " Ah, my dear Scipio ! what a charming piece of news is this ? Our fortune is made, my child. I will this very day give thee wax, with which thou mayest take the impression of the key, and put it into my hands. I shall easily find an obliging locksmith in Cardova ; in which, thank heaven, there is no scarcity of rogues."

" But why, said I to Gaspard, would you make a false key, when we can use the true one ? " " Because, answered he, my father, through distrust, or some other motive, may take it in his head to hide it elsewhere ; and therefore it is better to have one for ourselves." I approved of his caution ; and yielding to his inclination, prepared for taking the impression of the key. This was executed one morning early, while my old master paid a visit to father Alexis, with whom he had usually long conversations. This was not all ; I used the key in opening the box, which being filled with large and small bags, threw me into a charming perplexity ; I did not know which to chuse, such affection did I conceive for both kinds. Nevertheless, as the fear of being surprized did not permit me to make a long scrutiny, I laid hold of one of the largest, at a venture ; then locking the coffer, and replacing the key behind the hang-

hangings, I quitted the chamber with my prey, which I went and concealed under my bed, in a small wardrobe, where I lay.

Having performed this operation so successfully, I went immediately to the young Velasquez, who waited for me in a house, where he had appointed to meet me, and gave him infinite joy, by telling what I had done. He was so well satisfied, that he loaded me with caresses, and generously offered me the half of the money which was in the bag : but that I refused, saying, " No, no, Sir ; this first bag is your own ; use it for your occasions : I will soon return to the strong box, where, thank heaven, there is money enough for us both." In effect, three days after this, I carried off a second bag, containing, as the former, five hundred crowns, of which I would receive one fourth only, notwithstanding the pressing instances of Gaspard, that it should be equally divided between us.

As soon as this young man found himself well stocked, and, consequently, in a condition to satisfy his passion for women and play, he abandoned himself intirely to both : he had even the misfortune to fall in love with one of those famous coquettes, who devour and swallow the largest patrimonies in a very little time ; and being at a terrible expence on her account, laid me under the necessity of paying so many visits to the box, that at length old Velasquez perceived himself robbed. " Scipio, said he one morning, I must tell thee a secret : somebody robs me, my friend : my strong box has been opened, and several bags taken out : this is certain. Who must be taxed with this theft ? Or rather, who else than my son Gaspard, who has entered my chamber by stealth, or been introduced by thee ; for I am tempted to believe thee his accomplice, though you seem to hate one another so much. Nevertheless, I will not listen to my suspicion, since father Alexis hath answered for thy fidelity." I replied that thank

heaven, I never coveted my neighbour's wealth; and accompanied that lye with an hypocritical grimace, which served instead of an apology.

The old man, sure enough, said no more of the matter; but he did not leave off including me in his suspicion; and taking his precautions against our attempts, ordered his strong box to be secured by another lock, the key of which he always kept in his pocket. By these means, all commerce between us and the bags being broken, we looked very silly, especially Galspard, who being no longer able to gratify the extravagance of his nymph, was afraid of losing the privilege of visiting her. He had genius enough, however to invent an expedient which supported his expence a few days longer; and that ingenious shift was, to appropriate to himself by way of loan, all my share of the evacuations which I had performed in the strong box. I gave it all to the very last piece; and this methinks may pass for an anticipated restitution which I made to the old merchant, in the person of his heir.

The young man, when he had exhausted this resource, considering he now had none left, fell into a profound and gloomy fit of melancholy, which gradually disordered his reason. He looked upon his father as the only plague of his life; he was seized with the most violent despair; and, without listening to the voice of nature, the wretch conceived the horrible design of poisoning his parent. He not only communicated this execrable project to me, but even proposed that I should be the instrument of his vengeance. Being struck with horror at the proposal, "Sir, said I, is it possible that you should be so abandoned by heaven, as to form this abominable resolution! What! are you capable of murdering the author of your own being? Shall it be said that in Spain, in the very bosom of Christianity, a crime was committed, the very idea of which raises horror in the most barbarous nations? No, my dear
master

master (added I, falling on my knees before him); no; you will not commit an action which would justly incense the whole world against you, and be attended with the most infamous chastisement."

I said a great many things more, to dissuade Gaspard from such a guilty undertaking. I don't know where I found all the arguments of a virtuous man, which I used to combat his despair; but certain it is, I spoke like a doctor of Salamanca, though I was but a boy, and no other than the son of Coscolina. Nevertheless, in vain did I represent to him, that he ought to reflect seriously, and courageously repel those detestable sentiments which had taken possession of his soul; all my eloquence was ineffectual. He hung his head, and remained in sullen silence: so that I concluded he would not swerve from his resolution, notwithstanding all I could say.

Whereupon I went and demanded a private conversation with my old master; to whom, when we were shut up in a room together, I said, "Suffer me, Sir, to throw myself at your feet, and implore your mercy." So saying, I fell down before him in great agitation, with my countenance bathed in tears. The merchant, surprized at my prostration, and the disorder of my looks, asked what I had done: "A deed (I replied) of which I now heartily repent, and with which I will upbraid myself as long as I live. I have been weak enough to listen to your son, and to assist him in stealing your money." I then made a sincere confession of all that had passed on that subject: after which, I gave him an account of the conversation I had with Gaspard, whose design I revealed, without forgetting the least circumstance.

Bad as his opinion of his son was, old Velasquez could scarce credit my information, the truth of which, however, having no reason to doubt; "Scipio, said he, raising me, (for I was still on my knees) I pardon thee, in consideration of the important notice thou hast given me. Gaspard, added he, raising

his voice, Gaspard has a design upon my life ! Ah ! ungrateful son ! ah, monster ! who had better been stifled in the birth, than allowed to live and become a parricide ! what cause hast thou to attempt my life ? I allow thee a reasonable yearly sum for thy pleasures, and thou art not satisfied. Must I permit thee to squander away my whole fortune ?" Having uttered this bitter apostrophe, he laid injunctions upon me to keep the secret, and said he would consider what was to be done in such a delicate conjuncture.

I was very anxious to know what resolution this unfortunate father would take, when that very day he sent for Gaspard, and spoke thus to him, without manifesting a tittle of what he had in his head. " Son, I have received a letter from Merida, importing, that if you chuse to marry, you may have a maiden of that place, who is but fifteen years old, perfectly handsome, and mistress of a good fortune. If you have no reluctance to the marriage, we will set out early to-morrow for Merida, visit the lady who is proposed, and if you find her to your liking, you shall espouse her forthwith." Gaspard hearing mention made of a good fortune, which he thought was already in his clutches, answered without hesitation, that he was ready to go : so that next morning at day-break, they departed by themselves, mounted on two good mules.

When they had got as far as the mountains of Fesira, into a place as much frequented by robbers as dreaded by travellers, Balthazar alighted, desiring his son to do the same. The young man obeyed, and asked the reason of quitting their mules in that place. " I will tell thee," answered the old man, darting at him a look in which his grief and indignation were painted, we have no business at Merida ; and the marriage which I mentioned is only a fable I invented to bring thee hither. I am not ignorant, ungrateful and unnatural son ! I am not ignorant of the crime which thou hast hatched ; I know that I am to be presented with a poison prepared by
thee

thee : but fool that thou art, dost thou flatter thyself that thou canst deprive me of my life in that manner with impunity ? Thou art mistaken, thy guilt would soon be discovered, and thou wouldst perish by the hand of the hangman. There is, added he, a surer method of satiating thy rage, without exposing thyself to an ignominious death : we are here without witnesses, in a place where murders are committed every day : since thou art so estranged from my blood, plunge thy poignard into my bosom, and the murder will be imputed to robbers." So saying, Balthazar baring his breast, and pointing to his heart, "Here, Gaspard, added he, strike the mortal blow, and punish me for having given being to such a wretch as thee."

Young Velasquez, thunderstruck at these words, far from seeking to justify himself, fell without sense or motion at his father's feet. The good old man seeing him in that condition, which seemed to be the beginning of repentance, could not help yielding to his paternal weakness, and of flying to his assistance ; but Gaspard no sooner recovered the use of his reason, than, being unable to bear the presence of a father so justly incensed, he made an effort to get up ; mounted his mule, and rode off without speaking a word. Balthazar let him go, and leaving him to the remorse of his own conscience, returned to Cordova, where six months after he learnt that his son had thrown himself into the monastery of Carthusians at Seville, there to pass the rest of his days in penitence.

C H A P. XII.

The conclusion of Scipio's history.

BAD example sometimes produces good effects. The conduct of young Velasquez made me reflect seriously upon my own ; I began to combat my thievish inclinations, and live like an honest man. The habit of seizing all the money I could lay my hands on, was so much confirmed in me, by repeated acts, that it was not easily vanquished. Nevertheless,

I did not despair of succeeding, imagining, that to become virtuous, required only a sincere desire of being so. I therefore undertook this great work, and heaven seemed to bless my efforts; I no longer beheld the old merchant's strong box with a covetous eye; and I believe that, had it been in my power, I should not have touched one of his bags: I own, however, that it would have been very imprudent in him to put my infant integrity to such a proof; and therefore, Velasquez took care not to do it.

Don Manriquez de Medrano, a young gentleman, and knight of the order of Alcantara, came frequently to our house; we had his custom, and if he was not the best, he was at least the most noble of those who used the shop. I had the good fortune to please that cavalier, who, every time he met me, encouraged me to speak, and seemed to listen with pleasure to what I said. "Scipio, said he one day, if I had a lacquey of thy humour, I should think myself in possession of a treasure; and if thou didst not belong to a man for whom I have a regard, I would do my endeavour to debauch thee from his service." "Sir, said I, you would find it a very easy task: for I have an inclination to serve people of quality, that is my foible, I am charmed by their easy behaviour." "If that be the case, replied Don Manriquez, I will desire Signior Balthazar to consent to thy leaving him and coming into my service; I don't believe he will refuse me that favour." Indeed, Velasquez granted it the more easily, as he did not think the loss of a roguish lacquey irreparable: for my own part, I was glad of the change; the valet of a citizen appearing to me a mere beggar, in comparison to the lacquey of a knight of Alcantara.

To draw a faithful picture of my new patron, I must tell you, that he was a cavalier endowed with a most amiable person, and with such sweetness of temper and cultivated understanding, as captivated every body who knew him: besides, he had a great deal of
courage

courage and probity, and wanted nothing but fortune; being cadet of a family more illustrious than rich, he was obliged to subsist at the expence of an old aunt who lived at Toledo, and who loving him as her own son, took care to furnish him with what money he wanted; he went always handsomely dressed, and was perfectly well received every where. He visited the principal ladies of the city, and, among others, the marchioness of Almenara, a widow of seventy-two years of age; who, by her engaging behaviour and agreeable wit, allured the whole nobility of Cordova to her house. Men as well as women delighted in her conversation, and her family was stiled *the polite company*.

My master, who was one of the most assiduous visitors of that lady, came home from her house, one evening, with an enlivened look that was not natural to him: upon which, I said, "Signior, you seem to be strangely elevated; may your faithful servant ask the cause? hath not something extraordinary happened?" The knight smiled at that question, and owned he was actually engrossed by a serious conversation which he had enjoyed with the marchioness of Almenara. "I heartily wish, said I laughing, that the superannuated toast may have made a declaration of love to you." "Jesting apart, answered he, know, my friend, that I am really beloved by the marchioness." "Chevalier, said she to me, I know the smallness of your fortune as well as the nobleness of your birth: I have an inclination for you, and am resolved to make you easy in your circumstances, by marrying you, as I cannot decently make your fortune any other way. I know very well that this marriage will bring upon me the ridicule of the world; that scandal will be very busy at my expence; and that, in short, I shall pass for an old fool, who must needs have another husband. No matter, I intend to despise slander, in order to make you happy: all that I fear, added she, is that you may possibly have a reluctance to
comply

comply with my intentions. This, continued the knight, is the subject of her discourse, which surprized me the more, as she is the most virtuous and prudent woman of Cordova; I answered, therefore, I was astonished she should do me the honour of offering me her hand; she who had always persisted in the resolution of preserving her widowhood to the last; to this she replied, that having a considerable estate, she should be glad in her life-time, to share it with a man of honour whom she esteemed." "You are then, I suppose, said I, determined to hazard the leap." "Canst thou doubt it, he replied, the marchioness possesses immense wealth, together with excellent qualities both of the heart and head; and I must have lost my judgment indeed, if I rejected such an advantageous settlement."

I very much approved of my master's design, to lay hold of this fair occasion to make his fortune, and even advised him to push matters, so much was I afraid to see her inclinations change. Luckily, the lady, who had the affair still more at heart than I had, gave such expeditious orders, that the preparations were soon made for her marriage. As soon as it was known at Cordova, that the old marchioness of Almenara was going to marry young Don Manriquez de Medrano, the wits began to make themselves merry at the widow's expence: but in vain did they exhaust their stock of raillery, they could not divert her from her design; she let the whole city talk, and followed her knight to the altar: their nuptials were celebrated with such splendor as afforded new matter for scandal. "The bride, said they, might have, at least, for sake of decency, suppressed all noise and pomp, which but ill becomes old widows who marry young husbands."

The marchioness, instead of appearing ashamed of being, at her age, wife to the chevalier, indulged herself without constraint, in the joy which she felt on this occasion; she had a grand entertainment at her house

house, accompanied by a concert of music, and the feast ended in a ball, at which were present all the nobility of Cordova. Towards the end of the ball, our new-married couple slept off, and met in an apartment, where being shut up with a waiting-woman and me, the marchioness addressed herself to my master in these words: "Don Manriquez, this is your apartment; mine is in another part of the house; we will pass the night in separate chambers, and in the day, we will live together, like mother and son." The knight was at first mistaken, and believed that the lady talked thus, only to engage him to offer soft violence to her delicacy; imagining, therefore, that he ought out of pure politeness, to act the passionate lover, he approached her, and eagerly endeavoured to serve her in quality of a valet de chambre: but she, far from allowing him to undress her, pushed him away with a serious air, saying, "Hold, Don Manriquez; if you take me for one of those amorous old widows who marry again out of frailty, you are deceived; I did not espouse you to make you buy the advantages which you will reap from our contract of marriage; these are the pure offerings of my heart, and I exact nothing in return, but sentiments of friendship." So saying, she left my master and me in our apartment, and retired into her own, with her waiting maid, absolutely forbidding the chevalier to follow her.

After her retreat, we remained a good while, confounded at what we had heard. "Scipio, said my master, didst thou ever hear such a discourse as that of the marchioness? What dost thou think of such a lady?" "I think, sir, answered I, that she has not her fellow; you are happy in having such a wife, which is like the possession of a benefice without cure of souls." "As for my part, replied Don Manriquez, I admire a spouse of such an inestimable character, and I intend to compensate with all imaginable attention, the sacrifice which she makes to her de-

licacy." Having conversed sometime about the lady, we went to rest ; I upon a truckle bed in a wardrobe, and my master in a fine bed prepared for him, where I believe, at bottom, he was not sorry to lie alone, and to be quit for his fear only.

The rejoicings began again next day, and the new-married lady appeared in such good humour, as to afford scope to the ralliers. She was the first to laugh at what they said ; nay, even excited others to laugh, by receiving their sallies with a good grace. The knight, for his part, seemed no less satisfied with his spouse, and by the tender glances with which he looked and spoke to her, one would have thought that old age was his taste : this happy couple had in the evening a new conversation, in which it was decided, that without disturbing one another, they should live for the future, in the same manner as before marriage : meanwhile I must do Don Manriquez the justice to say, that out of consideration for his wife, he did what few husbands would have done in his place : he abandoned a girl in the city, whom he loved, and of whom he was beloved ; being resolved (as he said) to maintain no commerce which would seem to insult the delicate conduct of his wife towards him.

While he gave this old lady such strong marks of gratitude, she repaid them with usury, though she was ignorant of this behaviour, and made him master of her strong-box, which was even better replenished than that of Velasquez : as she had retrenched her house-keeping during her widowhood, she put it again on the same footing, on which it had been in the lifetime of her first husband ; she increased the number of her servants, filled her stables with horses and mules ; in a word, by her generosity, the chevalier, who was the poorest, became the richest knight of Alcantara. You will ask, perhaps, what I got by all this : I received fifty pistoles from my mistress, and one hundred from my master, who, moreover, made me his secretary, with an appointment of five hundred crowns ;

crowns; he had even so much confidence in my integrity, that he created me his treasurer.

"His treasurer!" (cried I, interrupting Scipio with a loud laugh.) "Yes, Sir, (he replied, with a dry serious look) no less than his treasurer; and I'll venture to say, that I acquitted myself in that employment with honour. True it is, I am perhaps somewhat indebted to cash; for, as I took my wages per advance, and quitted the knight's service suddenly, it is not impossible that I may now be in arrears: at any rate, it is the last reproach that I have deserved, having always acted with probity since that time.

I was, therefore, (continued the son of Coscolina) secretary and treasurer to Don Manriquez, who seemed as well satisfied with me, as I was with him; when he received a letter from Toledo, importing that his aunt Donna Theodora Moscoso was at the point of death. He set out instantly to see that lady, who had been a mother to him for many years, and I accompanied him in this journey, together with a valet de chambre and one lacquey. Being all mounted on the best horses in our stables, we soon got to Toledo, where we found Donna Theodora in such a condition as gave us hopes that she would not die of that distemper; and truly our prognostick, though contrary to that of an old physician who attended her, was verified by the event.

While the health of our good aunt was re-establishing, less, perhaps, by the remedies she took, than by the presence of her dear nephew; Mr. Treasurer passed his time as agreeably as he could, with young people, whose acquaintance soon introduced him to occasions of spending his money. They sometimes carried me to the tennis court, where they engaged me in play; and as I was not so expert a gamester as my master Don Abel, I lost much oftener than I won. I conceived insensibly an inclination for play; and if I had entirely abandoned myself to that passion, it, would, doubtless, have compelled me to
take

take from our cash, some quarters of my allowance per advance: but luckily, love saved both my own virtue and my master's money. One day, as I passed by the church *de los Reyes*, I perceived through a lattice, the curtains of which were withdrawn, a young maid who seemed rather a divinity than a mortal. I would use a term still stronger, if there was any, to denote the impression which she made upon my heart. I made it my business to get information about her, and by dint of inquiry, learned that her name was Beatrice, and that she was waiting maid to Donna Julia, second daughter to the Count de Polan.

Beatrice interrupted Scipio with a loud laugh, then addressing herself to my wife, "Beautiful Antonia, (said she) pray look steadfastly at me: don't you think I have the air of a divinity?" "You had at that time, in my eyes, (said Scipio to her) and since I no longer suspect your fidelity, you seem to me fairer than ever." My secretary, after such a gallant repartee, pursued his history thus:

This discovery quite inflamed me; not indeed with a legitimate ardour, for I imagined that I should easily triumph over her virtue, by presents capable of shaking it. But I judged amiss of the chaste Beatrice. In vain did I offer her, (by means of mercenary women) my purse and affection; she rejected my proposal with disdain. Her resistance increased my desires. I had recourse to the last expedient, and offered her my hand, which she accepted, when she knew I was secretary and treasurer to Don Manriquez. As we thought it convenient to conceal our marriage for some time, we were wedded privately in presence of Dame Lorenca Sephora, governess of Seraphina, and some other domestics belonging to the count de Polan. As soon as I had married Beatrice, she facilitated the means of seeing and conversing with her at night in the garden, into which I introduced myself by a little door, of which she gave me the key. Never were man and wife happier in one another, than Beatrice
and

and I. We waited with equal impatience for the hour of rendezvous, ran thither with equal eagerness; and the time which we spent together, though it was sometimes pretty long, seemed but a moment to both.

One night, which was as fatal to me, as the others had been propitious, I was surprized at entering the garden, to find the little door open. I was alarmed at this uncommon event, from whence I conceived a bad omen. I grew pale and trembled, as if I had foreseen what was to happen; and advancing in the dark towards an harbour where I used to converse with my wife, I heard the voice of a man. I stopt all of a sudden, to listen, and my ear was immediately saluted with these words, "Don't let me languish, my dear Beatrice! compleat my happiness, and consider that your fortune is connected with it." Instead of having patience to hear him to an end, I thought there was no occasion for knowing more. A jealous fury took possession of my soul; and breathing nothing but vengeance, I drew my sword, and went hastily into the harbour. "Ah! cowardly seducer (cried I), whosoever thou art, thou shalt sooner deprive me of life, than rob me of my honour." So saying, I attacked the cavalier, who was talking to Beatrice. He put himself into a posture of defence, and fought like a man who understood the art much better than I, who had only received a few lessons at Cordova. Nevertheless, swords-man as he was, I made a push which he could not parry; or rather his foot slipped. I saw him fall; and imagining I had wounded him mortally, fled as fast as my legs could carry me, without answering Beatrice, who called me.

"Yes really (said his wife, interrupting him) I called in order to undeceive him. The cavalier with whom I conversed was no other than Don Fernand de Leyva. That nobleman, who loved my mistress Julia, had formed the resolution of carrying her off
by

by force, believing it impossible to obtain her by any other means; and I myself had given him a meeting in the garden, to concert with him the steps of that undertaking, on which he assured me my fortune depended: but in vain did I call my husband; he avoided me as a wife who had been unfaithful to him."

My situation at that time was such (resumed Scipio), as rendered me capable of committing any thing. Those who know by experience what jealousy is, and to what extravagance it drives the soundest understandings, will not be surprized at the disorder which it produced in my weak brain. I underwent a momentary transition from one extreme to another. I felt the emotions of hatred succeed those of tenderness which I had entertained for my wife a moment before, and made an oath to abandon and banish her for ever from my memory. Besides, I thought I had killed a cavalier: and in that opinion, being afraid of falling into the hand of justice, suffered that inconceivable anxiety which incessantly pursues like a fury, the man who has done a bad action. In this horrible situation, my whole care being to escape, I did not go home, but instantly quitted Toledo, having no other baggage than the cloaths upon my back. True indeed, I had in my pocket sixty pistoles, which were a pretty good resource to a young man who proposed to live all his life in service.

I walked all night long, or rather ran; for the images of Algauzils, which continually haunted my imagination, supplied me still with new vigour; and the morning surprized me between Rodillas and Maqueda. When I arrived at this last town, finding myself a little fatigued, I went into the church as soon as it was open, and after having put up a short prayer, sat down upon a bench to rest me. I began to muse upon my present situation, which, heaven knows, was perplexing enough! but I had not time to make long reflections. I heard the church
echo

echo with two or three smacks of a whip, which made me conclude that a carrier was passing. I got up immediately to see whether or not I was mistaken : and by that time I got to the door, perceived one, who being mounted on a mule, led two more in a leash. " Stop, friend, (said I to him) where are these mules a-going ? " " To Madrid, (answered he) I came hither with two good dominican monks, and am going back by myself."

The opportunity that offered of travelling to Madrid, inspired me with an inclination to go thither. I made a bargain with the carrier, mounted one of the mules, and we pushed forwards for Illescas, where we were to sleep. Scarce had we got out of Maqueda, when the carrier, who was a man between thirty-five and forty years of age, thundered out church-singing with vast vociferation : he began with the prayers which the canons sing at matins, then sung the *Credo*, as it is sung at high mass ; and passing on to vespers, pronounced them, without even sparing the *Magnificat*. Altho' the rogue stunned me with his noise, I could not help laughing, and even encouraged him to continue, when he was obliged to stop and take breath. " Courage, friend (said I to him), pray go on : if heaven hath given you good lungs, I see you don't put them to a bad use." " No indeed (cried he), I am not, thank God, like the most part of carriers, who sing nothing but infamous or impious songs : I would not even repeat ballads, made upon our wars with the Moors ; for these are things at least frivolous, if not wicked." " You have (said I) a purity of heart rarely to be met with among muleteers : with this extreme delicacy in the choice of your songs, have you likewise made a vow of chastity, with regard to the young wenches, who live at inns upon the road." " Certainly, (answered he.) Continence is another thing on which I pique myself in these sorts of places, where I mind nothing but my mules." I was a little astonished to hear this phoenix of

of carriers talk in such a manner; and looking upon him as a man of honesty and discretion, entered into a conversation with him, after he had sung his fill.

We arrived at Illescas in the twilight, where alighting at an inn, I left the care of the mules to my companion, and went into the kitchen, where I ordered the landlord to prepare a good supper. This he promised to do so effectually, that I should remember I had lodged at his house the longest day I had to live. "Ask (said he), ask your carrier what sort of a man I am. Ecod! I will defy all the cooks of Madrid and Toledo to make an *Olla podrida* comparable to those I compose. I will treat you this night with a ragout of rabbit dressed in my manner, and you shall see whether or not I have reason to boast of my skill." Thereupon, shewing me a saucepan, wherein there was (as he said) a young rabbit already minced: "There (added he) is what I intend to give you. When I have once put in some pepper, salt, wine, a handful of sweet herbs, and other ingredients which I use in my sauces, I hope to serve you in a little time with a ragout worthy of a judge."

The landlord after having sounded his own praise, began to dress supper; and while it was doing, I went into the hall, where finding a kind of couch, I lay down, to sleep off my fatigue, having had no rest the night before. In two hours the carrier waking me, said, "Master, your supper is ready: come, if you please, and sit down at table." There was one in another room, with two covers, at which my fellow traveller and I sitting down, the ragout was served. I attacked it with a greedy appetite, and found it of an exquisite relish, whether hunger made me judge too favourably of it, or that my satisfaction was the effect of the cook's skill. We had also a plate of roast mutton; and I remarking that the carrier did honour to this last dish only, asked why he abstained from the other. He answered with a smile, that he

did not love ragouts. This reply, or rather the smile with which it was accompanied, seeming to me mysterious. "You conceal (said I) the true reason that hinders you from eating the ragout; pray, do me the pleasure of letting me know it. "Since you are so curious to know it, (he replied) I will tell you, that I have loathed all these sorts of ragouts, since, in going once from Toledo to Cuenca, they brought me for supper at an inn a hashed cat instead of a rabbit, and that gave me a disgust at all fricassees."

The carrier had no sooner spoke these words, than in spite of the hunger that devoured me, my appetite forsook me all of a sudden. I took it in my head that I had eaten of a pretended rabbit, and could no longer look at the ragout without making wry faces. My companion did not cure me of this conjecture, when he told me, that it was a common thing among the inn-keepers of Spain, as well as the pastry cooks, to substitute that *quid pro quo*. This discourse, you see, was very consoling; and therefore, I had not the least inclination to return to the ragout, nor even to touch the roast meat, lest the mutton might be as much sophisticated as the rabbit. I rose from table, cursing the ragout, the landlord and his inn; and lying down again upon my settee, passed the rest of the night more quietly than I had expected. Next morning early, after having paid the landlord as handsomely as if I had been extremely well treated, I departed from Illescas, my imagination still so full of the ragout, that I fancied every animal which I saw a cat.

I arrived in good time at Madrid, where, as soon as I had satisfied my carrier, I hired a small room near the sun-gate. Mine eyes, tho' accustomed to quality, were dazzled by the great concourse of noblemen, who usually appeared in the court-end of the town. I admired the prodigious quantity of coaches, and the infinite number of gentlemen, pages and lacqueys who attended the great. My admiration redoubled,

doubled; when going to the king's levee, I beheld that monarch surrounded by his courtiers. I was charmed at the sight, and said within myself, "I am no longer surprized at what I have heard, that one cannot possibly conceive the magnificence of the court of Madrid, without being an eye-witness of it: I am overjoyed at my coming hither, where I foresee I shall be able to do something." All that I could perform, however, was to contract a few unprofitable acquaintances. I gradually spent all my money, and thought myself very lucky in having an opportunity of bestowing myself with all my merit upon a pedant of Salamanca, whom a family affair had brought to Madrid, where he was born, and with whom I got acquainted by accident. I became his *factotum*; and when he returned to the university, followed him thither.

The name of my new patron was Don Ignacio de Ipigna; he assumed the Don, because he had been preceptor to a Duke, who, by way of recompence, settled upon him a pension for life; he enjoyed another as *emeritus* professor of the college; and he drew yearly from the public, a revenue of two or three hundred pistoles, by the books of dogmatical morality which he printed. The manner in which he composed his works well deserves honourable mention. He spent almost all the day in reading Hebrew, Greek and Latin authors, and in writing upon small squares of paper each apothegm or brilliant thought which he met with. As these squares were filled, he employed me to string them upon wire, in form of a garland, and each garland made a volume. What a world of bad books did we compose! we finished two volumes monthly, and immediately the press groaned with them. What was most surprising, he published these his compilings as performances entirely new; and if the critics thought proper to upbraid him with having pillaged the ancients, he

would

would answer with most haughty assurance, *furto latamur in ipso.*

He was also a great commentator; and there was so much erudition in his annotations, that he frequently made remarks on things scarce worthy to be observed; and sometimes wrote upon his paper squares, passages from Heliod and other authors, very little to the purpose. That I improved my understanding in the service of this virtuoso, it would be ungrateful in me to deny. I brought my hand-writing to perfection, by dint of transcribing his works. And as in treating me like a pupil, rather than a valet, he took care to cultivate my capacity; he was also far from neglecting my morals. "Scipio (he would say, when he heard of any piece of knavery committed by a servant) beware, my child, of following the bad example of that rogue; a valet ought to serve his master with equal fidelity and zeal." In a word, Don Ignacio lost no occasion of inculcating virtue in me; and his exhortations had such a good effect, that I was never in the least tempted to play him a trick during the fifteen months which I spent in his house.

I have already observed, that doctor de Ipigna was originally of Madrid, where he had a kinswoman called Catalina, chambermaid to the prince's nurse. This waiting-maid, who is the same whom I since made use of to procure Signior de Santillana's enlargement from the tower of Segovia, being desirous of doing a good office for Don Ignacio, engaged her mistress to ask a benefice for him from the duke of Lerma. That minister granted him a nomination to the archdeaconry of Grenada, which being in a conquered country, is in the gift of the king. We set out for Madrid, as soon as we learned this piece of news, the Doctor intending to thank his benefactress before his departure to Grenada. I had more than one opportunity of seeing and speaking to Catalina, who was pleased with my easy air and gay disposition.

position. For my part, I found her so much to my liking, that I could not help making suitable returns to the little marks of friendship which she bestowed on me. In fine, we contracted a mutual attachment. Forgive this confession, my dear Beatrice; as I believed you false, that mistake ought to screen me from your reproaches.

Mean while, Doctor Don Ignacio preparing for his departure to Grenada, his relation and I, frightened at the separation that threatened us, had recourse to an expedient which preserved us from that misfortune. I feigned myself sick, complained of my head and breast, and affected all the symptoms of a most violent distemper. My master called a physician, who having examined me with care, sincerely owned, that my distemper was a very serious matter, and that in all likelihood I should keep my chamber a long time.

The doctor, impatient to be at his cathedral, did not think proper to delay his departure, but took another young man into his service, leaving me to the care of a nurse, with whom he deposited a sum of money, to defray the expence of my funeral if I should die, or to recompence my service if I should ever recover of my disease. As soon as I understood that Don Ignacio was gone, all my complaints vanished. I got out of bed, dismissed my physician who had so much penetration, and got rid of my nurse, who stole more than half of the money with which she had been entrusted in my behalf. While I acted this part, Catalina performed another with her mistress Donna Anna de Guevara, whom, by persuading her that I was admirable in intrigues, she induced to chuse me for one of her agents. Madam nurse, whom her avarice always stimulated to new undertakings, having occasion for such people, received me into her family, and in a little time put my abilities to the proof. She gave me commissions which required some address; and without vanity,
I did

I did not acquit myself amiss. Wherefore, she was as well pleased with me, as I had cause to be dissatisfied with her. This lady was so covetous, that she would not allow me the least share of the fruits which she reaped from my industry and trouble. She imagined that she acted with great generosity in paying my wages punctually. This excess of avarice would have soon induced me to quit her service, had I not been retained by the affection of Catalina, which kindling every day more and more, she proposed, in a formal manner, that I should take her to wife.

"Softly, my dear, said I, that ceremony can't be performed between us so soon. I must first be convinced of the death of a young woman who got the start of you, and to whom (for my sins) I am married."

"Not you indeed, (replied Catalina) you only say so, to conceal in a polite manner the reluctance you have to wed me." In vain did I protest that I spoke the truth. She looked upon my sincere confession as a shift; and being offended at it, changed her behaviour towards me. We did not quarrel, but our correspondence visibly cooled, and we no longer retained for one another any other sentiments than those of decency and common regard.

At this juncture, I heard that Signior Gil Blas de Santillane, secretary to the prime minister of the Spanish monarchy, wanted a lacquey; and this place flattered me the more, as it was represented the most agreeable one that I could possess. "Signior de Santillane, said people to me, is a person beloved by the duke of Lerma, and of consequence cannot fail of pushing his fortune a great way: besides, he is very generous; so that in managing his affairs, you will effectually improve your own." I did not neglect this opportunity. I went immediately, and presented myself to Signior Gil Blas, for whom at first sight I felt a growing inclination, and who admitted me into his service on account of my physiognomy. I did

did not hesitate in quitting the nurse for him, and, if it please heaven, he shall be my last matter.

Here Scipio finished his history: then addressing himself to me, "Signior de Santillane, (said he) pray witness for me to these ladies, that you have always found me a zealous and faithful servant. I have need of your testimony to persuade them that the son of Coscolina has purged his morals, and that virtuous sentiments have succeeded his vicious inclinations."

"Yes, ladies, (said I) this is what I can answer for: if Scipio in his childhood was a real *Picaro*, he has corrected his conduct so well since that time, that he is now the model of a perfect servant. Far from having cause to blame his behaviour towards me, I must own that I lie under great obligations to him. The night on which I was apprehended, to be carried to the tower of Segovia, he saved from pillage and secured a part of my effects, which he might have appropriated to himself with impunity. He not only preserved my money, but also, through pure friendship, came and shut himself up with me in prison, preferring the melancholy pleasure of sharing my sorrows to all the charms of liberty.

BOOK XI.

CHAP. I.

Gil Blas is overwhelmed with joy, which is disturbed by a melancholy event. Such changes happen at court, as induce Santillane to go thither again.

I Have already observed, that there was great harmony between Antonio and Beatrice; the last being used to live like a submissive waiting woman, and the other habituating herself to act the mistress. Scipio and I were husbands of too much gallantry, and too well beloved by our wives, to be long without children: they grew pregnant almost at the same time. Beatrice, who was the first delivered, brought into the world a girl: and a few days after Antonia crowned my happiness in bringing forth a boy. I sent my secretary to Valencia with this piece of news for the governor, who came to Lirias with Seraphina, and the marchioness of Pliego, to stand god-mothers to the children, being pleased to add this token of affection to those I had already received. My son, whose god-father and god mother were that nobleman and the marchioness, was christened Alphonso; and my lady governess, willing that I should have the honour of being doubly her gossip, stood with me for Scipio's daughter, to whom we gave the name of Seraphina.

Not only the people of my family were rejoiced at the birth of my son: the inhabitants of Lirias likewise celebrated it by feasts, which shewed that the whole village partook of their master's pleasure. But alas! our rejoicings were not of long duration: or rather, they were all of a sudden converted into groans, complaints and lamentations, by an event which more than twenty years have not been able to make me forget, and which will ever be present to

my thoughts: my son died, and his mother, though safely delivered, soon followed him; a violent fever robbed me of my dear wife, fourteen months after we had been married. Let the reader conceive, if possible, the sorrow with which I was seized. I fell into a state of stupid dejection; and felt my loss so much, that I seemed quite insensible. I was in this condition five or six days, during which I would take no sustenance; and had it not been for Scipio, I believe I should either have let myself die of hunger, or have lost my reason intirely; but that dexterous secretary found means to beguile my grief, by conforming himself to it: he made me swallow broths, by the art of presenting them with such a mortified look, as if he gave them not so much with a view of preserving my life, as of nursing my affliction.

This affectionate servant, having written to Don Alphonso, on account of my misfortune, and the deplorable situation in which I was; that tender and compassionate nobleman, that generous friend, repaired immediately to Lirias. I cannot without being melted, recal the moment in which he presented himself to my view: My dear Santillane! (said he, embracing me) I am not come hither to console you; I am come to mourn with you, for Antonia, as you would mourn with me, had fate robbed me of my Seraphina. In effect, he shed tears and mingled his sighs with mine: So that, overwhelmed as I was with sorrow, I had a lively sense of Don Alphonso's goodness.

This governor having had a long conference with Scipio, about the means of vanquishing my grief; they concluded that I must for some time be removed from Lirias, where every thing recalled incessantly to my mind the image of my poor Antonia; upon this, Don Cæsar's son promised to carry me with him to Valencia, and my secretary seconded him so well, that I yielded to his proposal. I left Scipio and his wife at my house, every part of which, indeed, served

only

only to increase my affliction, and set out with the governor. When I arrived at Valencia, Don Caesar and his daughter-in-law spared nothing to divert my chagrin; they entertained me by turns, with all the amusements that seemed proper to dispel it; but in spite of all their endeavours, I continued as much as ever, plunged in the most profound melancholy. It was not Scipio's fault, that I did not resume my tranquillity: he came often from Lirias to Valencia, to know how I was, and returned sad or gay, as he perceived me more or less disposed to receive consolation.

One morning entering my chamber, "Sir, (said he with great emotion) there is a report in the city which interests the whole kingdom; it is said that Philip the Third is no more, and that the prince his son, is now upon the throne; nay more (added he) that the cardinal duke of Lerma has lost his post, that he is even forbid the court, and that Don Gaspard de Guzman*, count d'Olivarez, is now prime minister." I felt myself agitated by this piece of news, without knowing wherefore; and Scipio perceiving it, asked if I was any how affected by this great change. "Why should it affect me, my child? (said I) I have quitted the court, and ought to look with indifference upon all the changes that can happen there."

"For a man of your age, (replied the son of Coscolina) you are very much detached from the world; were I in your place, I should have a longing desire

† Don Gaspard de Guzman, duke of St. Lucar de Barameda, and Count d'Olivarez, upon the death of Philip the Third, and disgrace of the Cardinal Duke of Lerma, became prime minister to Philip the Fourth, and enjoyed, at one time, the posts of great chamberlain, high chancellor of the Indies, treasurer general of Arragon, supreme counsellor of state, chief master of the horse, captain-general of the whole Spanish cavalry, and governor of Guipiscua,

to go to Madrid, and shew my face to the young monarch, to see if he would remember me: this is a pleasure in which I would indulge myself." "I understand thee, (said I) thou wouldst have me return to court, and try fortune a-new, or rather to grow ambitious and covetous again." "Why should your morals be corrupted? (answered Scipio) have more confidence in your own virtue; I will answer for your conduct; the wholesome reflections which you made upon the court, during your disgrace, will screen you from the perils of it: re-imbark boldly upon a sea, the shelves of which you are so well acquainted with." "Peace, flatterer (said I, interrupting him with a smile) art thou tired of seeing me lead a quiet life? I thought thou hadst a greater regard for my repose."

In this part of our conversation, Don Cæsar and his son coming in, confirmed the news of the king's death, as well as the duke of Lerma's misfortune; they moreover told me, that this minister having asked leave to return to Rome, it was refused, and he was ordered to repair to his marquisate at Denia; then, as if they had been in concert with my secretary, they advised me to go to Madrid, and present myself to the new king, since I was known to him, and had even done him such service as the great always recompence with pleasure. "As for my part (said Don Alphonso) I don't doubt but he will be grateful, and that Philip the Fourth will pay the debts of the prince of Spain." "I am of the same opinion (said Don Cæsar), and look upon Santillane's journey to court as an occasion for him to arrive at great preferment.

"Truly, gentlemen (cried I), you don't consider what you say; to hear you, one would think I had nothing to do but repair to Madrid, in order to have the golden key or some government conferred on me; you are mistaken; I am, on the contrary, persuaded that the king would take no notice of my person,

were

were I to present myself to his view: I will do it, if you desire, in order to disabuse you." The noblemen of Leyva took me at my word, and I could not help promising that I would immediately set out for Madrid. As soon as my secretary saw me determined on the journey, he felt an immoderate joy: he imagined that I should no sooner appear before the new monarch than that prince would distinguish me in the crowd, and load me with honours and wealth; thereupon, feeding his fancy with the most splendid chimeras, he raised me to the first offices of the state, and preferred himself by the help of my elevation.

I got ready, therefore, to return to court, not with a view of sacrificing again to fortune, but to satisfy Don Cæsar and his son, who imagined that I should soon possess the favour of my sovereign. True it is, I myself felt at the bottom some desire of trying if the young prince would know me again: attracted by this emotion of curiosity, without hope or design of reaping any advantage from the new reign, I departed with Scipio, for Madrid, leaving the care of my house to Beatrice, who was an excellent œconomist.

C H A P. II.

Gil Blas arrives at Madrid, and appears at court: the king remembers and recommends him to his prime minister. The consequence of that recommendation.

WE gained Madrid in less than eight days, Don Alphonso having accommodated us with two of his best horses, that we might make the greater dispatch; and we alighted at a furnished house where I lodged before, belonging to Vincent Forrero, my old landlord, who was very glad to see me again.

As this was a man who piqued himself upon knowing every thing that happened, both at court and city, I asked if there was any thing new? "A great many things,

things, answered he, since the death of Philip the third, the friends and partisans of the cardinal duke of Lerma, have bestirred themselves to maintain his eminency in the ministry; but their efforts have been ineffectual: the count d'Olivarez has got the better of them all. It is said, that Spain loses nothing by the change, and that the new prime-minister has a genius of such vast extent, that he is able to govern the whole world: heaven preserve him. What is certain, added he, is, that the people have conceived the highest opinion of his capacity; and we shall see in the end, whether the duke of Lerma is well or ill replaced." Forrero having thus opened, gave me an account of all the changes which had been made at court, since the count d'Olivarez steered the helm of the monarchy.

Two days after my arrival at Madrid, I went to court in the afternoon, and put myself in the king's way, as he went into his closet; but he did not look at me: I returned next day to the same place but was not more fortunate. The third time, he cast his eye upon me, as he passed, but seemed to take no notice of my person; whereupon I came to a determination, and said to Scipio who accompanied me, "Thou seest that the king does not remember me, or if he does, has no mind to renew the acquaintance: I believe it will not be amiss for us, to set out upon our return to Valencia." "Not so fast, Sir, replied my secretary, you know better than I, that success at court is only to be obtained by patience; don't cease shewing yourself to the prince; by dint of perseverance in appearing before him, you will oblige him to consider you more attentively, and to recal the features of his agent with the fair Catalina.

That Scipio might have nothing to reproach me with, I had the complaisance to continue the same conduct during three weeks: and one day, at length the monarch, struck with my appearance, ordered me to be called in; and I entered his closet, not without great disorder, to find myself *te-te-te* with my sovereign.

reign. "Who are you? said he, I remember your face, but cannot recollect where I have seen you." "Sir, answered I trembling, I had the honour to conduct your majesty, one night, with the count de Lerma, to the house of ——" "Oh! I remember it," said the prince interrupting me, you was secretary to the duke of Lerma, and if I am not mistaken, your name is Santillane. I have not forgot that you served me with abundance of zeal on the occasion, and that you was very ill rewarded for your pains: was not you imprisoned for that adventure?" "Yes, Sir, said I I was six months in the tower of Segovia, from whence your goodness delivered me." "That, answered he, does not acquit me of the obligation; it is not enough to set you at liberty, I ought to recompence you for the misfortune you suffered for love of me."

Just as the prince had pronounced these words, the count d'Olivarez entered the closet. A favourite takes umbrage at every thing: he was astonished to find a stranger there: and the king redoubled his surprize, in saying to him: "Count, I recommend this young man to you; employ him in some shape or other, and take care of his advancement." The minister affected to receive this order with a gracious look, eying me from head to foot, and very anxious to know who I was. "Go, friend, said the monarch to me, making a sign for me to retire, the count will not fail to employ you in an advantageous manner, both for my service and your own interest."

I immediately quitted the closet, and rejoined the son of Coscolina, who, extremely impatient to know what the king had said to me, remained in the utmost agitation. He asked me forthwith, whither we must return to Valencia or stay at court? "Thou shalt judge, said I: then I overwhelmed him with joy, in recounting to him, word for word, the short conversation which I had with the king. "My dear master, said Scipio to me, when he heard it, will you distrust

my almanacs again? confess that the lords of Leyva and I were not to blame, in exhorting you to take a trip to Madrid. I already see you in some eminent post, you will become the Calderona of count d'Olivarez. "That is not all that I wish: said I interrupting him, I have no ambition for a place which is invironed with so many precipices. I would rather have an employment in which I should have no occasion to do injustice, or carry on a shameful traffick of my prince's favours: after the use I made of my past credit, I cannot be too much upon my guard against avarice and ambition." "Come, Sir, replied my secretary, the minister will give you some good post, which you may fill without ceasing to be an honest man."

More urged by Scipio, than by my own curiosity, I went next day to the house of count d'Olivarez, before sun-rise, having been informed that every morning, in summer and winter, he gave audience by candle-light. I modestly took my station in the corner of the hall, from whence I narrowly observed the count when he appeared; for I had but a superficial view of him, in the king's closet: he was taller than the middle size, and might have past for a fat man in a country where we see none almost but lean people: his shoulders were so high, that I thought him hunch-backed, though he was not so: his head, which was extremely large, hung down upon his breast; his hair was black and straight, his visage long, his complexion of an olive colour, his mouth sunk in, and his chin pecked and turned upwards at the end.*

All this together could not make a very handsome appearance; nevertheless, as I believed him to be well disposed towards me, I looked upon him with a favourable eye, and even found him agreeable. True

* It was probably on account of this his disadvantageous figure, that he commonly gave audience from his coach, or received people, sitting.

it is, he treated every body with an affable and pleasant air, and very graciously received the memorials which were presented to him : and this seemed to supply the place of a good person. Mean while, when I advanced in my turn to salute him, and make myself known, he darted a rude and threatening look at me ; then turning his back, without deigning to hear me, returned into his closet. I now thought him more ugly than he was naturally, went out of the hall, very much confounded at such an unfavourable reception, and did not know what to think of the matter.

Having rejoined Scipio, who waited for me at the door, " Dost thou know, said I, what reception I have met with ?" " No, answered he, but it is not difficult to guess : the minister, ready to conform himself to the pleasure of his prince, has, doubtless, offered you some considerable employment." " There you are mistaken," I replied, telling him at the same time, in what manner I had been received. Having listened attentively, he said, " The count must have forgot you, or mistaken you for somebody else : I advise you to wait on him again, and I am sure he will treat you with another sort of look." I followed my secretary's advice, and presented myself the second time before the minister, who treated me still worse than at first, frowned at me, as if the sight of me had given him pain, turned his eyes another way, and retired without speaking one word.

I was touched to the quick by his behaviour, and tempted to depart immediately for Valencia : but this Scipio did not fail to oppose, being unwilling to renounce the hopes which he had conceived. " Dost thou not see, said I to him, that the count wants to remove me from court ? The king has expressed to him some regard for me, and that is sufficient to bring upon me the aversion of his favourite : let us yield, my child, let us yield with a good grace to the power of such a formidable foe." " Sir, answered he, in-

censed against the count d'Olivarez, I would not so easily quit my ground; I would go and complain to his majesty, of the little regard which the minister shews to his recommendation." "Bad counsel, my friend, said I; if I should take that imprudent step, I would soon repent it; nay, I believe I run some risk in tarrying in this city."

My secretary began to weigh these words, and considering that we had actually to do with a man who might make us revisit the tower of Segovia, he partook of my fear, and no longer opposed my desire of quitting Madrid, from whence I resolved to move the very next day.

C H A P. III.

Gil Blas is hindered from executing his resolution to leave the court, and receives an important piece of service from Joseph Navarro.

ON my return to my lodging, I met my old friend Joseph Navarro, clerk of the kitchen to Don Balthazar de Zuniga. I went up to him, saluted him, and asked if he knew me, and if he would still be so good as to speak to a wretch who had repaid his friendship with ingratitude. "You confess then," said he, "that you have not used me extremely well?" "Yes, answered I, and you have a right to load me with reproaches: I deserve them all, if I have not already expiated my crime, by the remorse which attended it." "Since you have repented of your fault," replied Navarro, embracing me, "I ought no longer to remember it." I, on my part, hugged Joseph in my arms; and we resumed our former sentiments for each other.

He had heard of my imprisonment, and the disorder of my affairs, but was ignorant of what followed. I informed him of all, and even recounted to him the conversation I had with the king, not concealing the bad

bad reception I had met with from the minister, no more than my design of retiring again to my solitude. "Beware of going thither, said he, since our monarch has expressed a friendship for you: it must certainly be of some service. Between you and me, the count d'Olivarez has a very singular disposition, and is full of whims: he sometimes, as on this occasion, acts in a very unaccountable manner; and nobody but himself has the key of his irregular behaviour. Finally, whatever reasons he may have for receiving you in this manner, stick close to the business; he will not hinder you from profiting by the prince's bounty; this is what I assure you: I will mention it this evening to Signior Don Balthazar de Zuniga, my master, who is uncle to the count d'Olivarez, and shares with him the cares of government. Navarro having told me this, asked a direction to my lodging, and so we parted.

It was not long before I saw him again. Coming to me next day, "Signior de Santillane, said he, you have a protector in my master, who will favour you with his support. On account of the good character which I gave of you, he has promised to speak in your behalf to his nephew the count d'Olivarez, whom I hope he will prepossess in your favour. My friend Navarro, who did not serve me by halves, introduced me two days after to Don Balthazar *, who said to me with a courteous look, "Signior de Santillane, your friend Joseph has spoke so well of you, as to engage me in your interests." "I made a profound bow to Signior de Zuniga; and answered that I should all my life have a lively sense of the obliga-

* Don Balthazar de Zuniga Count de Montere, was great commander of Leon, governor to Philip IV. king of Spain, ambassador at Rome and Vienna, and president of the Italick council.

tion I lay under to Navarro, for having procured for me the protection of a minister who was justly stiled, *The light of the council*. Don Balthazar at this flattering reply, clapt me on the shoulder, saying with a smile, " You may go again to morrow to the levee of the count d'Olivarez, with whom you will be better satisfied than before."

I appeared therefore, the third time, before the prime minister; who, having distinguished me in the croud, honoured me with a smiling look, from whence I conceived a good omen. " This goes well, (said I to my myself :) the uncle has made the nephew hear reason." I now expected a favourable reception; and my expectation was fulfilled: the count, after having given audience to every body, sent for me to his closet, where he said to me, with a familiar air, " Friend Santillane, forgive me for having thrown thee into perplexity, for my diversion; I pleased myself with giving thee uneasiness, in order to try thy prudence, and see what thou wouldst do in thy chagrin. I don't doubt thou thoughtest I was displeased with thee; but, on the contrary, my child, I own I have a liking to thy person. Though the king, my master, had not ordered me to take care of thy fortune, I should have done it through pure inclination. Besides, my uncle Don Balthazar de Zuniga, to whom I can refuse nothing, has desired me to look upon thee as one for whom he interests himself: this is enough to determine me in thy favour." This declaration made such a strong impression upon my senses, that they were quite disordered. I threw myself at the feet of the minister, who having bid me rise, went on in this manner: " Come hither again this afternoon, and call for my steward, who will impart to thee the orders I shall give him." So saying, his excellency went out to hear mass, as he usually did every day, after having given audience; and then repaired to the king's levee.

CHAP. IV.

Gil Blas acquires the love of the count de Olivarez.

I Did not fail to return in the afternoon, and call for the steward, whose name was Don Raymond Caporis. I no sooner told him my name, than, saluting me with great demonstrations of respect, "Signior, (said he) follow me if you please: I will conduct you to the apartment which is destined for you in this house." So saying, he carried me by a little stair to a range of five or six rooms, which composed the second story of one wing of the house, and which were very plainly furnished. "This (said he) is the lodging which his Grace appoints for you; and here you will have a table with six covers, maintained at his expence. You will be served by his own domestics, and there will always be a coach at your command. This is not all, (added he) his excellency has ordered me to treat you with the same respect, as if you was of the family of Guzman" "What the deuce is the meaning of all this! (said I to myself) How am I to understand these distinctions! Is there not some mischief at bottom? and is it not for his diversion that the minister gives me such honourable treatment." While I was in this uncertainty, fluctuating between hope and fear, a page came and told me, that the count wanted me. I went instantly to his Grace, who being alone in his closet, "Well, Santillane, (said he) art thou satisfied with thy apartment, and the orders which I have given to Don Raymond?" "The goodness of your excellency, answered I, seems to me excessive; and I receive it with fear and trembling." "For what reason? (said he) can I do too much honour to a man whom the king has recommended to my care? No indeed; I do no more than my duty in treating thee in an honourable manner; be not therefore surprised at what

I do

I do for thee ; and be assured, that a solid and splendid fortune cannot escape thee, provided thou art as much attached to me as thou wast to the duke of Lerma. But with regard to that nobleman, added he, I have been told that you lived in great familiarity with him. I am curious to know how you two became acquainted, and what employment you exercised under that minister : disguise nothing : I insist upon hearing the whole truth." I then remembered my perplexity with the duke of Lerma, in the same case, and in what manner I extricated myself : and this I practised again very successfully ; that is to say, in my narration I softened the rough places, and passed slightly over those things which did not much redound to my honour : I likewise spared the duke of Lerma ; though in doing otherwise I should have better pleased my hearer. As for Don Rodrigo de Calderona *, I gave him no quarter

* Rodrigo Calderona, after having been page to the Vice chancellor of Arragon, entered into the service of the duke of Lerma, and by the interest and favour of that minister, which he engrossed in a particular manner, obtained very considerable offices. He was first of all made gentleman of the bed-chamber to the king, then secretary of state : some time after, he received the collar of the order of St. Jago, was made commander of Arcana, and created captain of the German guard. Such extraordinary favour he could not bear with moderation, but becoming extremely insolent and licentious, despised the most powerful grandees of Spain, to whose hatred he fell a sacrifice, after the disgrace of the Cardinal Duke of Lerma. He was arrested in the year 1619, and tried on an impeachment containing 250 articles, among which were sorcery and poisoning the Queen ; though these two were not proved, yet he was condemned to lose his head ; and being allowed to dis-
pose

quarter, but disclosed all the fine strokes which he struck in the traffic of commanderies, governments and benefices.

"What you tell me of Calderona (said the minister, interrupting me) is conformable to several memorials which have been presented against him, and which contain heads of accusation still more important. His trial will soon come on; and if you wish his downfall, I believe your desire will be satisfied."

"I don't desire his death, (said I) though it was not his fault that I found not mine in the tower of Segovia, where he was the cause of my being imprisoned for a good many months." "How! (cried his excellency) was Don Rodrigo the cause of thy imprisonment? this is what I did not know. Don Balthazar, to whom Navarro recounted thy history, told me that the late king ordered thee to be confined, as a punishment for having carried the prince of Spain to a suspected place, in the night; but I knew no more of the matter: and I can't conceive what part Calderona could play in the piece." "The

pose of by will, no more than two thousand ducats of all his immense wealth, was ordered to prepare for death. He was afterwards deprived of the ensigns of knighthood, and conducted to the place of execution, dressed in a cassock mourning cloak, with a caul of frize, and a cross upon his breast. His body, with two torches on each side of it, was guarded on the scaffold by a party of the patrolle till the evening, when a great number of priests being assembled to honour his remains, they were dismissed, and forbid to accompany the corpse, which was carried without any pomp to the church of the Carmelites, according to his own desire. His head was severed by a stroke upon the throat, because in Spain, none but traitors receive it on the neck behind: and he died with such courage and decency, as affected even his enemies with sorrow and remorse.

part

part of a lover who revenges an injury received," (answered I). I then told him the whole adventure, which he thought so diverting, that, grave as he was he could not help laughing, or rather weeping with mirth. He was infinitely rejoiced with Catalina, sometimes niece and sometimes grand-daughter, as well as with the part which the duke of Lerma acted in the whole.

When I had finished my narration, the count dismissed me, saying, that he would not fail to find me some employment next day. I ran immediately to the house of Zuniga, to thank Don Balthazar for his good offices, and to tell my friend Joseph how well I was with the prime-minister.

CHAP. V.

The private conversation which Gil Blas had with Navarro, and the first business in which he was employed by the count d'Olivarez.

AS soon as I saw Joseph, I told him with some agitation, that I had a great many things to communicate: upon which, he carried me to a private place: where, after having informed him of what had happened, I asked his opinion of the matter. "My opinion (answered he) is, that you are in the way of making a vast fortune: every thing smiles upon you: you are agreeable to the prime-minister; and another thing which may turn out to your advantage is, that I can do you the same service which you received from my uncle Melchior de la Ronda, when you first entered the family of the archbishop of Granada. He spared you the trouble of studying the prelate and his principal officers, by disclosing their different characters to you at once; and I will, after his example, make you acquainted with the count, the countess his wife, and donna Maria de Guzman, their only child,

The minister has a quick penetrating genius, capable of forming grand designs. He sets up for an universal man, because he has a small tincture of every science, and believes himself able to decide in every thing. He imagines himself a profound lawyer, a great captain, and a most consummate politician. Add to this, he is so intoxicated with his own opinions, that he always follows them rather than those of others, that he may not seem beholden to the understanding of any man. Between you and me, this defect may have strange consequences, from which heaven preserve the monarchy. He shines in the council by a natural eloquence; and he would write as well as he speaks, if, in order to dignify his stile, he did not affect expressions which render it stiff and obscure. He is, besides, very whimsical, capricious and chimerical. So much for his head. As to his heart, he is generous and friendly. He is said to be vindictive: but what Spaniard is otherwise? He is also accused of ingratitude, in being the occasion of exiling the duke d'Uzeda and the friar Lewis Aliaga: to whom, people say, he had great obligations: but this is pardonable; the desire of being prime-minister prevails over every other sentiment.

Donna Agnez de Zuniga a Velasco, countess of Olivarez (continued Joseph), is a lady who has no fault that I know but that of selling her favours at a high price. As for donna Maria de Guzman, who is, without contradiction, this day the richest match in Spain, she is an accomplished young lady, and the idol of her father: model your behaviour accordingly: be assiduous in making your court to these two ladies, and appear still more devoted to the count d'Olivarez than you was to the duke of Lerma, before your journey to Segovia; in which case you will certainly become a person of rank and power.

I likewise advise you (added he) to wait upon my master Don Balthazar, from time to time; though you have no need of him for your advancement,
don't

don't neglect him : he has a very good opinion of you at present ; preserve his friendship and esteem, which may be of service to you upon some occasion or other." " As the uncle and nephew (said I) are both concerned in the ministry, is there no jealousy between the two colleagues?" " On the contrary (answered he), they live together in the greatest harmony. Had it not been for Don Balthazar, the count d'Olivarez, perhaps, would not have been prime-minister : for, in short, after the death of Philip the Third, all the friends and partizans of the house of Sandoval exerted themselves very much ; some in favour of the cardinal, and others in behalf of the son : but my master, who was the most subtle among the courtiers, and the count as cunning as he, broke all their measures, and took such effectual steps to secure that place, that their antagonists were quite foiled. The count d'Olivarez, when he became minister, shared the administration with his uncle Don Balthazar, to whom he left the care of foreign affairs, reserving all domestic concerns to himself : so that by these means strengthening the ties of friendship which ought naturally to unite persons of the same blood, these two noblemen, independent of one another, live in such good correspondence, as to me seems unalterable."

Such was the conversation I had with Joseph ; by whose information I hoped to profit : after which, I went to thank Signior de Zuniga, for his goodness towards me. He told me very politely, that he would seize every occasion of befriending me ; and that he was very glad to find me satisfied with his nephew ; to whom, he assured me, he would speak again in my favour ; resolving at least (he said) to convince me that he had my welfare at heart ; and that, instead of one patron, I had two. It was thus that Don Balthazar, out of friendship for Navarro, interested himself in my behalf.

That very evening I quitted my hired room, to go
and

and lodge at the prime minister's house, where I supped with Scipio, in my own apartment. There we were served by the domestics of the family, who while we ate our victuals with an affected gravity, laughed, perhaps, within themselves, at the respect which they were commanded to shew. When the table was uncovered, and they were retired, my secretary, laying aside his constraint, said a thousand diverting things, which his gay disposition and sanguine hopes inspired. As for me, although overjoyed at the brilliant situation in which I saw myself, I felt myself no longer disposed to be dazzled by it: but, going to bed, slept soundly, without giving way to the agreeable ideas with which I might have entertained my fancy; whereas the ambitious Scipio enjoyed little repose, but passed half of the night, in hoarding up money for the portion of his daughter Seraphina.

I had scarce got on my cloaths next morning, when I was sent for by his grace; who, when I came before him, said to me, " Well, Santillane, let us see a speciman of what thou canst do: thou sayest, the duke of Lerma employed thee in abridging memoirs: I have got one which I intend for thy first essay. The subject of it is this; it must be a performance to prepossess the public in favour of my ministry. I have already privately spread a report, that I found affairs in very great disorder: the business therefore is, to expose to the eyes of both court and city, the miserable condition to which the monarchy is reduced. We must, on this subject, draw a picture which will strike the people, and hinder them from regretting the loss of my predecessor. After that, you must extol the measures which I have taken to render his majesty's reign glorious, his dominions flourishing, and his subjects perfectly happy.

His grace having spoke in this manner, gave me a paper, containing the just causes the nation had to complain of the preceding administration, summed
up

up in ten articles, the least of which, I remember, was sufficient to alarm all good Spaniards : then shutting me in a closet adjoining to his own, he left me to work at liberty. I began to compose my memorial as well as I could : I first of all described the bad condition of the kingdom, the finances exhausted, the royal revenue eaggrossed by partizans, and the marine entirely ruined. I then demonstrated the faults committed by those who had governed the state, under the last reign, and the terrible consequences which might proceed from these faults. In short, I represented the monarchy in danger, and so sharply censured the former minister, that, according to my memorial, the loss of the duke of Lerma was a great happiness for Spain. To say the truth, though I harboured no resentment against that nobleman, I was not sorry to do him this good office. Such is the disposition of man !

In fine, after a frightful picture of the misfortunes which threatened Spain, I encouraged the minds of people, by making them conceive fair hopes of the future. I made the count d'Olivarez speak like a saviour sent from heaven, for the salvation of the state ; I promised mountains and miracles : in a word, I entered so well into the views of the new minister, that he seemed surprized at my performance ; which when he had read to an end, " Santillane, (said he) dost thou know that thou hast composed a morsel worthy of a secretary of state ? I am not surprized that the duke of Lerma employed thy pen ; thy stile is concise, and even elegant ; but I think it is a little too natural." He then pointed out the places which were not to his taste, altering them with his own hand ; and I perceived, by his corrections, that he loved (as Navarro had told me) obscure and far-fetched expressions. Nevertheless, though he was resolved to have nobleness, or rather conceits in his diction, he preserved two thirds of my work ; and, to shew how well he was satisfied with my capacity, sent to me,

by

by Don Raymond, three hundred pistoles, as a desert at dinner.

C H A P. IV.

The use to which Gil Blas put the three hundred pistoles; and his charge to Scipio: with the success of the above-mentioned memorial.

THIS favour of the minister furnished Scipio with a new opportunity of congratulating me on my return to court. "You see (said he) that fortune has great designs in your favour. Are you now sorry for having quitted your solitude? Long life to the count d'Olivarez! he is quite another sort of a patron than his predecessor. The duke of Lerma, though you was so much attached to him, let you languish several months, without giving you one pistole; whereas the count has already bestowed upon you a gratification, which you could not have expected till after long service.

"I wish (added he) that the lords of Leyva were witnesses of the happiness which you enjoy, or at least made acquainted with it." "It is time indeed for them to know it, (answered I) and I was just going to talk to thee about the matter. I don't doubt that they are extremely impatient to hear from me; but I waited until I should see myself settled in some shape or other, and be able to inform them positively, whether or not I should stay at court. Now that I am fixed, thou mayest set out for Valencia when thou wilt, to inform those noblemen of my present situation, which I look upon as their own work, since it is certain, that, had it not been for them, I should never have determined upon my journey to Madrid." "My dear master, (cried the son of Coscolina) how happy will they be, when I recount to them what has happened to you! would I were already at the gates of Valencia!

cia! but I shall be there very soon: Don Alphonso's two horses are ready: I will set out immediately with one of his grace's lacqueys; for, besides that I shall be glad of a companion on the road, you know people will be dazzled by the livery of the prime minister."

I could not help laughing at the ridiculous vanity of my secretary; though vainer still perhaps, than he, I let him do as he desired. "Go, said I, and return as soon as possible; for I have another commission to give thee: thou must go to the Asturias with money for my mother: I have, through negligence, let the time pass on which I promised to remit an hundred pistoles to her, and which thou undertook to deliver with thy own hand. These sorts of promises from a son ought to be so sacred, that I upbraid myself with my want of punctuality." "Sir, answered Scipio, in six weeks I will bring you an account of both these commissions; I will converse with the lords of Leyva, make a tour to your country-house, and re-visit the city of Oviedo, which I never remember, without wishing three fourths and a half of its inhabitants at the devil." Upon this, I counted out to the son of Coscolina one hundred pistoles for my mother's pension, with an hundred more for himself; that he might agreeably perform the long journey which he had undertaken.

A few days after his departure, the count sent our memorial to the press; and it was no sooner published, then it became the subject of all conversation in Madrid. The people, always friends to novelty, were charmed with the performance; the low ebb of the finances, which was painted in lively colours, incensed them against the duke of Lerma; and if the strokes of the quill, which that minister received, were not applauded by every body, at least they met with abundance of approbation.

As for the magnificent promises made by the count d'Olivarez, and, among others, that of defraying the national

national expence by a prudent æconomy, without incommoding the subjects; they dazzled the citizens in general, and confirmed them in the grand opinion which they had already entertained of his capacity: so that the whole city echoed with his praise.

That minister, overjoyed to see the accomplishment of his aim, which in that book had been to acquire the public affection, was resolved to deserve it effectually by a commendable action, which should be serviceable to the king. For this purpose, he had recourse to the invention of the emperor Galba; that is, to make those who had enriched themselves, the Lord knows how, in the administration of the finances, re-george their wealth. When he had drawn from those leeches the blood which they had sucked, and filled the coffers of the king, he undertook to preserve it, by suppressing all pensions, not even excepting his own, as well as the gratifications that were given out of the king's exchequer. To succeed in this design, which he could not execute without changing the face of government, he employed me in composing a new memorial, the substance and form of which he dictated. He then enjoined me to rise, as much as I could, above the ordinary simplicity of my stile, and give more dignity to my expressions. "Enough, my lord, said I, your excellency shall have the *splendid* and *sublime* which you desire." I shut myself up in the same closet where I had composed the first, and there went to work, after having invoked the eloquent genius of the archbishop of Grenada.

I began by representing, that we could not be too careful in preserving the money which was in the treasury, and which ought to be employed only in the emergencies of the state, as being a sacred fund, reserved on purpose to keep the enemies of Spain in awe. Then I demonstrated to the king, (for the memorial was addressed to him) that in taking away all the pensions and gratifications with which the revenue was saddled, he should not for all that, deprive him-
self

self of the pleasure of rewarding those subjects who should preserve his favour ; since, without touching his treasure, he was in a condition to bestow upon them great recompences : that for some, he had vice-royalties, governments, others of knighthood, and military employments ; for others, commanderies, and pensions upon them, titles, magistracies ; and, in fine, all sorts of benefices for those who are consecrated to the church.

This memorial, which was much longer than the first, took me up near three days : and luckily, I compos'd it to the taste of my master : who, finding it written with emphasis, and stuffed with metaphors, loaded me with applause. " I am very well satisfied with this, (said he, pointing to the most tumid places) these are well-stamped expressions. Courage, friend ; I foresee that thou wilt be of great service to me." Nevertheless, in spite of the applause which he was so prodigal, he did not fail to re-touch the memorial. He inserted a good deal of his own, and compos'd a piece of eloquence which charmed the king and the whole court. The city join'd its approbation, conceived a happy omen of the future, and flattered itself, that the monarchy would resume its ancient lustre under the ministry of such a great man,

His excellency, seeing that this piece did him a great deal of honour, was willing that I should reap some fruit from it, in consideration of my share in the composition ; he accordingly bestow'd upon me a pension of five hundred crowns upon the commandery of Castile ; which was the more agreeable to me, as it was not wickedly, though easily got,

CHAP. VII.

By what accident, in what place and condition Gil Blas found his friend Fabricio; and the conversation that happened between them.

Nothing gave more pleasure to the count, than to know the opinion which the people of Madrid had of his conduct in the ministry. He asked me every day, what people said of him; and even maintained spies, who brought him an exact account of what passed in the city. They reported to him every word which they heard; and as he ordered them to be sincere, his self-love suffered sometimes; for the people have an intemperance of tongue which has no respect of persons.

When I perceived that he was pleased with these reports, I employed myself every afternoon, in going to public places, and joining conversation with good company. When they spoke of the government, I listened with attention; and if they said any thing that deserved to be re-told to his excellency, I did not fail to inform him of it: but it must be observed, that I never reported any thing which was spoke to his prejudice.

One day, as I returned from one of these places, passing by the door of an hospital, I felt an inclination to enter. I walked through two or three wards full of sick people a-bed, and surveyed every thing around me. Among these unfortunate people, whom I could not behold without compassion, I was struck with the appearance of one, who, I believed, was my old friend and comrade Fabricio. That I might have a more distinct view of him, I approached his bed; and having no longer any reason to doubt that it was the poet Nunnez, stopt a few minutes to consider him, while he, recollecting me also, eyed me

in the same manner. At length, breaking silence "Sure (said I) my eyes deceive me! is this actually Fabricio whom I meet in this place?" "The very same (answered he coldly;) and thou hast no cause to be surpris'd at it. Since I left thee, I have ever exercised the business of an author: I have compos'd romances, comedies, all kinds of works of genius. I have run my race, and am now at the hospital."

I could not help laughing at these words, and still more at the serious air with which they were pronounced. "How! (cried I) has thy Muse brought thee to this place?" "Thou seest it is so (he replied: this house is the retreat of many a wit. Thou hast done well, my child, to take another road: but, methinks, thou art no longer at court, and the face of thy affairs is changed: nay, I remember to have heard that thou wast imprisoned by order of the king."

"True (said I) the charming situation in which I was, when we parted, in a little time after was followed by a reverse of fortune, which robbed me of my wealth and liberty: nevertheless, my friend, thou seest me again in a more flourishing state than ever."

"That is impossible! (cried Nunnez) thy apparel is frugal and plain; and thou hast not that vain and insolent air which prosperity usually gives." "Misfortune (answered I) hath purified my virtue; and I have learned in the school of adversity, to enjoy riches with moderation."

"Tell me then (cried Fabricio, starting up in a transport) what may be thy employment? what business dost thou follow? art thou not steward to some ruined grandee, or opulent widow?" "I have a better post (I replied) but thou must dispense with my telling thee more at present: I will satisfy thy curiosity another time: I will now only let thee know that I am in a condition to assist thee, or rather, to make thee easy for life, provided thou wilt promise to write no more works of genius, either in verse or prose. Dost thou feel thyself capable of making such

a sacrifice

a sacrifice to me?" "I have already made it to heaven (said he) during a severe distemper of which I am just cured. A Dominican father has made me abjure poetry, as an amusement which, if not criminal, at least diverts the mind from the pursuit of wisdom and virtue."

"I congratulate thee, my dear Nunnez (answered I); but beware of a relapse." "That I am in no fear of (he resumed): I am firmly resolved to abandon the Muses: and when thou camest into the ward, was just composing an eternal adieu to them in verse." "Mr. Fabricio, said I, shaking my head, I don't know if the Dominican and I dare trust to your abjuration, you seem so furiously enchanted by these learned damsels." "No, no, (answered he) I have broke off all connection with them; nay, more; I have conceived an aversion for the public, which does not deserve that authors should consecrate their works to it: I should be sorry if I could produce any thing that would please it. Don't imagine (continued he) that this language is dictated by passion: I speak in cold blood. I equally despise the applause and hisses of the public, which one does not know how to manage. It is so capricious, that it does not think two days one way. What fools are those dramatic writers who are vain of the success of their performances! Whatever noise they make by their novelty, if they are brought upon the stage twenty years after, they are for the most part very ill received. The present generation taxes the past with want of taste, and its determinations are contradicted by those of the next. From whence I concluded, that those authors who are now applauded, will be hissed by posterity. It is the same thing with regard to romances, and other amusing books, which, tho' at first they meet with general approbation, insensibly sink into contempt. That honour therefore which we reap from the good success of our works,

is nothing but a mere chimera, an illusion of the brain, a fire of straw which evaporates in smoke."

Tho' I was well convinced that the Asturian poet spoke this from passion only, I did not seem to perceive it; but said to him, "I am overjoyed to find thee disgusted with the belle lettre, and radically cured of the rage of writing. Be assured that I will immediately procure for thee an employment in which thou mayest enrich thyself, without being at a great expence of genius." "So much the better!" (cried he) Genius stinks in my nostrils, and I now look upon it as the most fatal present that heaven can bestow upon man," "I wish, my dear Fabricio, I replied, that thou mayest still preserve these sentiments. If you persist in your resolution to quit poetry, I repeat it, I will soon procure for thee an honourable and lucrative post; but until I can do thee this service, added I, giving him a purse of sixty pistoles, pray accept of this small token of my friendship."

"O generous friend! cried the son of barber Nunnez, transported with gratitude and joy, what thanks do I owe to heaven for bringing thee into this hospital, which I will leave this very day, by thy assistance!" And he actually ordered himself to be transported into a hired lodging. But, before we parted, I told him where I lived, and invited him to come and see me, as soon as he should be perfectly recovered. He seemed extremely surprized, when I told him that I lodged in the house of the count de Olivarez. "Thrice happy Gil Blas, (said he) whose fate it is to be a minister's favourite! I rejoice at thy good fortune, since thou usest it so well."

CHAP. VIII.

Gil Blas becomes more and more beloved by his master. Scipio returns to Madrid, and gives an account of his journey to Santillane.

THE count d'Olivarez, whom henceforth I shall call the count-duke, because the king was pleased about this time to honour him with that title, had a foible which I discovered, very much to my own advantage; and this was a desire of being beloved. As soon as he perceived that any one attached himself to him through inclination, he immediately conceived a friendship for that adherent.

I took care not to neglect this observation. I was not contented with barely doing what he commanded. I executed his orders with such demonstrations of zeal, as quite won his heart. I studied his taste in all things, that I might conform myself to it; and anticipated his desires as much as I could.

By this conduct, which seldom fails of success, I insensibly became the favourite of my master, who, on his part, as I myself had the same foible, gained my whole soul, by the marks of affection which he bestowed upon me; and I insinuated myself so far into his favour, that I at length shared his confidence with Signior Carnero, his chief secretary.

Carnero had practised this method of being agreeable to his excellency; and succeeded so well, that he was intrusted with the mysteries of the cabinet. That secretary and I were the two confidants of the prime minister, and the depositories of his secrets; with this difference, that he spoke to Carnero of nothing but state affairs, and conversed with me on his own private concerns only; by these means making, as it were, two separate departments with which we were both equally satisfied, we lived together without jea-

lously, as without friendship. I had cause to be pleased with my situation, which giving me continual opportunities of being with the count-duke, I was always at hand to observe the very bottom of his soul; which he, though naturally dissembling, ceased to conceal from me, when he no longer doubted the sincerity of my attachment.

"Santillane, said he to me one day, thou hast seen the duke of Lerma enjoy an authority, which looked more like the power of an absolute monarch than that of the favourite minister: nevertheless I am still more lucky than he was, even at the highest point of his fortune. He had two formidable enemies in the duke d'Uzeda his own son, and in the confessor of Philip the Third. Whereas, I see not one person near the king, who has credit enough to hurt me, nor even one whom I suspect to be my foe."

"It is true indeed, continued he, that when I came to the ministry, I suffered none to be near the prince but those who were connected with me, either by blood or friendship. I have by viceroyalities or embassies got rid of all those noblemen who by their personal merit might have acquired some portion of my sovereign's favour, which I was resolved entirely to possess: so that I may now safely say, no great man takes umbrage at my credit. Thou seest, Gil Blas, (added he) that I disclose my heart to thee. As I have reason to think thee intirely devoted to me, I have chosen thee for my confident. Thou dost not want understanding; art, I believe, modest, prudent, and discreet; in a word, thou seemest proper for executing twenty sorts of commissions, which require a young man of extensive understanding, who is at the same time in my interests."

I was not proof against the flattering images which these words raised in my imagination. Some vapours of avarice and ambition mounted into my brain, and awaked in me those sentiments over which I thought
I had

I had gained a complete triumph. I protested to the minister, that I would answer his intentions with all my power; and I kept myself ready to execute, without scruple, all the commissions with which he should think proper to intrust me.

While I was thus disposed to raise new altars to Fortune, Scipio returning from his journey, said, "I have not a tedious narration to make. The lords of Leyva were charmed when I told them the reception you met with from the king, when he knew you, and with the behaviour of the count d'Olivarez."

Here I interrupted Scipio, saying, "You would have given them still more pleasure, my friend, could you have told them on what footing I am now with his grace. The rapidity of the progress which I have made in his excellency's heart since thy departure, is altogether prodigious." "God be praised, my dear master, answered he, I foresee that a splendid destiny awaits us." "Let us wave this subject, said I, and talk of Oviedo. Thou hast been at the Asturias; in what condition didst thou leave my mother?" "Ah! Sir, he replied, assuming all of a sudden a melancholy look, I have nothing but afflicting news for you from that quarter." "O heaven, cried I, my mother is certainly dead." "Six months ago, said my secretary, the good lady paid the tribute of nature, as well as your uncle Signior Gil Perez."

I was deeply affected with my mother's death, although in my infancy I had never received from her those caresses which are necessary to make children grateful in the sequel. I likewise paid those tears which I owed to the good canon, for the care he had of my education. My grief indeed did not last long, but soon mellowed into a tender remembrance which I have always preserved of my parents.

C H A P. IX.

How, and to whom, the count-duke married his only daughter, with the bitter fruits which that marriage produced.

SOON after the return of Coscolina's son, the count-duke fell into a profound reverie, in which he remained for the space of eight whole days. I imagined that he was meditating some great stroke of politics; but the subject of his musing regarded his own family only. "Gil Blas (said he to me one afternoon) thou must have perceived that I am a good deal perplexed in mind. Yes, my child, I am wholly engrossed by an affair upon which the repose of my life depends; and I will impart the secret to thee.

"Donna Maria my daughter, continued he, is now marriageable, and her heart is disputed by a great number of noblemen. The count de Niebles, eldest son of the duke de Medina Sidonia, chief of the family of Guzman, and Don Lewis de Haro, eldest son of the marquis de Carpio and my own sister, are the two candidates who seem best entitled to the preference; especially the last, who possesses merit so much superior to that of his rivals, that all the court persuade themselves, I shall make choice of him for my son-in-law. Nevertheless, without entering into the reasons which I have to exclude him, as well as the count de Niebles, I will tell thee, that I have cast my eyes on Don Ramires Nunnes de Guzman, marquis of Toral, and chief of the family of Guzman d'Abrados: to this young nobleman, and the children which he shall have by my daughter, I intend to leave my whole estate, annexed to the title of count d'Olivarez, to which I will join the quality of grandee: so that, my grand-children and their descendants proceeding from the branch d'Abrados and that of Olivarez, will pass for the eldest of the Guzman family.

"Well,

" Well, Santillane, added he, dost thou not approve of my design ?" " Pardon me, Sir, answered I, the project is worthy of the genius that formed it ; I am only afraid that the duke de Medina Sidonia will murmur at it." " Let him murmur, if he pleases, resumed the minister, I shall give myself very little trouble about that. I don't love his branch, which has usurped the birth-right and titles thereunto attached, over the house of Abrados. I shall mind his complaints less than the chagrin of my sister the marchioness of Carpio, in seeing her son disappointed in his expectation of my daughter. But, after all, I intend to please myself, and it is already decided, that Don Ramires shall prevail over all his rivals."

The count-duke having taken this resolution, gave a new mark of his singular policy, in putting it in practice. He presented a petition to the king, begging that he and the queen would be pleased to bestow his daughter in marriage, describing the characters of the noblemen who were in pursuit of her, and leaving the choice intirely to their majesties ; but he did not fail, in speaking of the marquis of Toral, to shew that he was the most agreeable of them all. Whereupon, the king, who had a blind complaisance for his minister, returned this answer ; " I believe Don Ramires Nunnez worthy of your daughter Donna Maria ; nevertheless, take your own choice. The match which will suit you best, will be most agreeable to me. The king."

The minister affected to shew this answer ; and pretending to look upon it as his prince's order, made haste to marry his daughter to the marquis of Toral ; an event that very much displeased the marchioness de Carpio, as well as the Guzmans, who had flattered themselves with the hope of espousing Donna Maria. Nevertheless, as they could not hinder the marriage, they affected to celebrate it with great demonstrations of joy. One would have thought the whole family was charmed with the occasion ; but the malcontents

were soon revenged in a manner very melancholy for the count-duke. Donna Maria * in ten months brought forth a daughter, which died in the birth, and in a few days after fell herself a victim to death. What a loss was this for a father, who, to use the expression, had no eyes but for his daughter : and who saw in this event the miscarriage of his design, of taking the right of eldership from the branch of Medina Sidonia ! He was so much affected, that for some days he shut himself up, and would see nobody but me, who, conforming myself to his immoderate grief, seemed as much afflicted as he. To tell the truth, I made use of this occasion to shed fresh tears to the memory of Antonia. The resemblance which her death had to that of the marchioness de Toral burst open again the wound which was but imperfectly cured, and renewed my affliction so much, that the minister, overwhelmed as he was with his own sorrow, could not help being struck with mine. He was astonished to see me enter so warmly into his chagrin ; “ Gil Blas, said he one day, perceiving me plunged in the most melancholy sadness, it is a sweet consolation for me, to have such a sympathizing confident.” “ Ah ! my lord, answered I, giving to him all the honour of my affliction, I must be very ungrateful and hard-hearted indeed, if I did not sincerely sympathize with your grace. How can I consider that you mourn the loss of a daughter of accomplished merit, whom you tenderly loved, without mingling my tears with yours ? No, my lord, I am so sensible of your goodness, that as long as I live I shall always share in your pain as well as pleasure.”

* Mr. Le Sage has here deviated from the true history ; for Donna Maria died unmarried, though she was betrothed to Raymond de Guzman, Marquis of Toral, afterwards created duke of Medina de las Torres.

CHAP. X.

Gil Blas by accident meets the poet Nunnez, who tells him, that he has composed a tragedy, which is immediately to be presented on the prince's theatre. The bad success of that piece, with the surprizing good luck which attended its fall.

THE minister began to be consoled, and I of consequence to resume my good humour, when one evening I went out all alone to take the air in my coach, and met in my way the Asturian poet, whom I had not seen since he quitted the hospital. He being very well dressed, I took him into the coach, and we drove together to St. Jerome's meadow.

"Mr. Nunnez, said I to him, I think myself very lucky in having met you by chance, otherwise I should not have had the pleasure."—No reproaches, Santillane, said he with precipitation, I sincerely own that I had no intention to visit thee, and thou shalt hear the reason. You promised me a good post, provided I should abjure poetry; and I have found a very substantial one, on condition that I make verse. I have accepted this last, as most suitable to my humour. A friend of mine has introduced me into the family of Don Bertrand Gomez de Ribero, treasurer of the king's gallics. This Don Bertrand, who wants to have a wit in his pay, finding my versification very brilliant, has chosen me preferably to five or six authors, who offered themselves candidates for the employment of his private secretary."

"I am very glad to hear it, my dear Fabricio, said I, for that Don Bertrand is in all appearance very rich." "Rich! answered he, they say he has such immense wealth, that he cannot count it. Be that as it will, my office is this; as he piques himself upon
being

being gallant, and would pass for a man of genius, he keeps a literary correspondence with several very sprightly ladies, and I lend him my pen to compose billets filled with wit and humour. I write for him, in verse to one, in prose to another, and sometimes in person carry the letters, to shew the multiplicity of my talents."

"But thou hast not told me, said I, what I chiefly desire to know; art thou well paid for thy epistolary epigrams?" "Very largely, he replied. Rich people are not always generous, and I know some of them who are mere scrubs! but Don Bertrand uses me very nobly. Over and above two hundred pistoles of fixed wages, I frequently receive from him small gratifications, which put me in a condition to act the gentleman, and pass my time agreeably with some authors, who are like me enemies to care."

"But (I resumed) has thy treasurer taste enough to relish the beauties of a work of genius, and to perceive its faults?" "Not at all, (answered Nunnez) though he can talk speciously, he is by no means a connoisseur. He gives himself out, however, for another *Tarpa**, decides boldly, and supports his opinion with such loudness and obstinacy, that generally when he disputes, his antagonist is obliged to yield, in order to avoid the shower of ill language with which he is wont to overwhelm his opponents."

"Thou mayest well believe (pursued he) that I am very cautious of contradicting him, whatever cause he gives me for so doing; for besides the disagreeable epithets which I should certainly bring on myself, I might possibly be turned out of doors. I therefore

* Sp. Metius Tarpa, a famous critic of the Augustan age: his tribunal was in the temple of Apollo, where he sat with four colleagues, to judge the merit of all theatrical performances, before they were exhibited on the stage.

prudently applaud what he praises, and disapprove of every thing which he condemns. By this complaisance, which costs me nothing, because I possess the art of accommodating myself to the characters of those who can befriend me, I have gained the friendship and esteem of my patron. He has engaged me to compose a tragedy on a subject which he suggested. I have accordingly finished it under his eye; and if it succeeds, I shall owe one part of my glory to his good advice."

I asked the title of his tragedy, and he told me it was called the *Count de Saldagne*, informing me at the same time, that it would be represented in three days on the prince's theatre. "I wish (answered I) that it may have a great run, and I have such a good opinion of thy genius, as to hope it will." "I hope so too, (said he) but there is no dependance upon such hope, so uncertain are authors of the event of a dramatic piece." At length the first day of its representation arrived; and as I could not go to the play, being hindered by a commission I had to perform for his grace, all that I could do was to send Scipio thither, that I might, at least, know that very evening the success of a performance in which I interested myself. After having waited with impatience, I saw him return with a look from which I conceived a bad omen. "Well, (said I) how hath the *Count de Saldagne* been received by the public?" "Very brutally answered he never was piece more barbarously used. I came away incensed at the insolence of the pit." "And I (said I) am incensed at the fury of Nunnez, in composing plays. Must he not have lost his judgment entirely, to prefer the ignominious shouts and hisses of an audience, to the happy lot which I could have procured for him?" Thus through friendship did I inveigh against the Asturian poet, and afflicted myself at the misfortune of his piece, while he exulted in the event.

Two days after, he actually came to my house in a transport of joy. "Santillane, (cried he) I am come to share with thee the extreme pleasure which I feel. In composing a bad play, my friend, I have made my fortune. Thou knowest the strange reception which the *Count de Saldagne* met with; all the spectators exclaimed against him, as if for a wager, and to that general exclamation I owe my good fortune."

Astonished to hear the poet Nunnez talk in that manner; "How, Fabricio, (said I) is it possible that the fall of thy tragedy can justify this thy immoderate joy?" "Yes sure, (answered he) I told thee before, that Don Bertrand had inserted some of his own composition in my piece, which of consequence he thought excellent. He was violently picqued to find the spectators of a different opinion, and this morning said to me, "*Nunnez, Victrix causa Diis placuit. sed victa Catoni* : if the public is displeased with thy production; in recompence, it pleases me, and that is enough. To console thee for the bad taste of the age, I will give thee two thousand crowns a-year on my estate; let us go instantly to my notary, and have the deed drawn. We went thither accordingly, the treasurer has signed the deed, and paid me the first year advance."

I congratulated Fabricio on the happy fate of the *Count de Saldagne*, since it had turned out so much to the author's advantage. "Thou hast reason (continued he) to compliment me on that occasion; how happy am I in having been soundly hissed! if the public had been kind enough to honour me with applause, what service should I have received from it? Nothing of consequence. I should have got but a very moderate sum for my labour, (whereas its hisses have all of a sudden made me easy for life."

CHAP. XI.

Santillane obtains an employment for Scipio, who departs for New Spain.

MY secretary could not without envy look upon the unexpected good fortune of the poet Nunnez, which was the sole subject of his discourse during eight whole days. "I admire (said he) the caprice of Fortune, that sometimes delights in loading a detestable author with wealth, while she leaves men of genius in misery; I wish she would take it in her head to enrich me also in the space of one night." "That may very well happen, said I, and much sooner than you imagine. Thou art here in her temple, for I think we may call the prime-minister's house the temple of fortune, where favours are often bestowed, which all of a sudden enrich those who obtain them." "That is true, Sir, answered he, but they must be waited for with patience." "Once more, Scipio, said I, make yourself easy; perhaps you are on the point of having some good post." A few day after, an opportunity actually offered of employing him advantageously in the service of the count-
duke, and I did not let it escape.

Discoursing one morning with Don Raymond Caporis, steward of the prime minister, our conversation turned upon his excellency's revenues. "His grace (said he) enjoys the commanderies of all the military orders, which are worth forty thousand crowns per annum, and he is obliged to wear the cross of Alcantara only. Besides, his three posts of great chamberlain, master of the horse, and grand chancellor of the Indies, bring in two hundred thousand more; and all that is nothing in comparison to the immense sums which he draws from America. I will tell you
how :

how : when the king's ships set sail from Seville or Lisbon for that country, he embarks on board of them wine, oil and corn, which his estate of Olivarez affords, and he pays no duty. He sells these commodities in the Indies for four times the price which they would yield in Spain, then employs the money in purchasing spices, colours, and other things which are bought for almost nothing in that new world, and afterwards are sold at a high rate in Europe. He has already got many millions by this traffick, without doing the least prejudice to the king. What will not surprise you, (continued he) is, that the people employed in transacting this commerce always return enriched, the count allowing them to take care of their own fortune, while they manage his."

Coscolina's son, who listened to our discourse, could not hear Don Raymond talk thus, without interrupting him. "Zooks! Signior Caporis, I should be glad to be one of these people, for I have long wished to see Mexico." "Your curiosity will soon be satisfied (said the steward to him) if Signior de Santillane has no objection to your desire. Tho' I am very nice in the choice of those whom I send to the Indies on this employment, (for I choose them all) I will, without hesitation, insert you in my register,, if your master desires it." "You will oblige me in so doing (said I to Don Raymond), pray give me that mark of your friendship. Scipio is a young man I love; besides, he has a great deal of understanding, and will behave in an irreproachable manner; in a word, I can answer for him as for myself."

"If that be the case (resumed Caporis), let him repair immediately to Seville, the ships will sail for the Indies in a month. He shall have a letter from me at his departure, for a man who will give him all necessary instructions to enrich himself, without prejudicing

dicing the interests of his excellency, which must ever be looked upon as sacred."

Scipio, charmed with his employment, made haste to set out for Seville, with a thousand crowns which I gave him, to buy wine and oil in Andalusia, and put him in a condition to trade in the Indies on his own bottom. Nevertheless, glad as he was to make a voyage by which he hoped to profit so much, he could leave me without shedding tears, and I could not behold his departure with indifference.

C H A P, XII.

Don Alphonso de Leyva comes to Madrid; the motive of his journey. Gil Blas is afflicted at the cause; but rejoices at the consequence of it.

SCIPIO was scarcely gone when a page belonging to the minister brought to me a billet containing these words, "If Signior de Santillane will give himself the trouble to call at St. Gabriel's head in Toledo-street, he will there see one of his best friends." "who can this anonymous friend be? (said I to myself) Why does he conceal his name? he wants, I suppose, to give me the pleasure of surprize." I went out immediately to Toledo-street, and going to the appointed place, was not a little astonished to see Don Alphonso de Leyva. "Are you here, my lord!" (cried I.) "Yes, my dear Gil Blas, (answered he, hugging me close in his arms) it is Don Alphonso himself whom you see," "What brings you to Madrid?" (said I.) "I will both surprize and afflict you (he replied), in telling the cause of my journey, I am deprived of the government of Valencia, and the prime minister has ordered me to court, to give an account of my conduct." I remained a whole quarter of an hour mute and thunder-struck,

der-struck, then recovering myself, asked what he was accused of? "I know nothing of the matter (answered he), but impute my disgrace to a visit which I made about three weeks ago to the Cardinal duke of Lerma, who has been a month confined to his castle of Denia.

O! truly (said I, interrupting him) you have reason to attribute your misfortune to that indiscreet visit; you need seek for the cause of it no where else; and give me leave to say, you did not consult your usual prudence, when you went to visit the disgraced minister." "The error is now committed (said he), and I have taken my resolution with a good grace. I will retire with my family to the castle of Leyva, where I will spend the rest of my days in profound peace. All that gives me concern is, my being obliged to appear before a haughty minister, who may possibly treat me uncivilly. A sufficient mortification to a Spaniard! nevertheless it must be borne; but before I would make this submission, I was willing to speak with you."

"My lord (said I), don't present yourself before the minister, until I know what you are accused of; perhaps the evil is not without remedy. Be that as it will, you must allow me, if you please, to exert myself in your favour, as much as gratitude and friendship require." So saying, I left him at the inn, assuring him that he should hear from me soon.

As I had not meddled in state affairs, since the two memorials, of which eloquent mention has been made, I went to Camero, and asked if it was true that the government of Valencia had been taken from Don Alphonso de Leyva. He answered in the affirmative, but said he was ignorant of the cause. Upon this, I formed a resolution, without hesitation, to address myself to his grace, that I might learn from his mouth what cause he had to complain of Don Caesar's son.

I was so much penetrated with this troublesome event, that I had no occasion to effect a melancholy look to appear afflicted in the eyes of the count duke. "What is the matter, Santillane? (said he as soon as he saw me) I perceive an impression of sorrow on thy countenance, and even the tears ready to drop from thine eyes: has any body injured thee? speak and thou shalt be revenged." "My lord (answered I weeping) I could not conceal my sorrow from you, if I would: I am quite in despair, being told that Don Alphonso de Leyva, is no longer governor of Valencia; for I could not have heard a piece of news that would affect me more." "What sayst thou, Gil Blas? (replied the minister astonished) What concern canst thou have with that Don Alphonso and his government?" I then gave him a detail of all the obligations I lay under to the lords of Leyva: and afterwards recounted in what manner I had obtained from the duke of Lerma, the government in question, for Don Cæsar's son.

When his excellency had heard me to an end, with an attention full of kindness for me, he said, "Dry up thy tears, my friend. I not only was ignorant of what thou hast told me, but own also, that I looked upon Don Alphonso as a creature of the cardinal of Lerma: put thyself in my place; would not the visit which he made to his eminence, make thee suspect him? I am willing to believe, however, that having received his employment from the cardinal, he took that step out of pure gratitude. I am sorry for having displaced a man who owed his post to thee; but if I have destroyed thy work, I can repair it. I will even do more for thee, than the duke of Lerma did: thy friend Don Alphonso was no more than the governor of the city of Valencia and I will make him Viceroy of the kingdom of Arragon: thou mayst go and inform him of this piece of news, and desire him to come and take the oaths.

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When I heard these words, I passed from the extremity of grief to an excess of joy, which disturbed my intellects so much, that my disorder appeared in the compliment of thanks, which I made to his grace, who was not, however, displeased at my confusion. But when I told him that Don Alphonso was already at Madrid, he said I might introduce him that very day. I ran immediately to the St. Gabriel, where Don Cæsar's son was overjoyed to hear of his new employment; he could scarce believe what I said, so improbable did it seem to him, that the minister, whatever friendship he had for me, was capable of bestowing vice-royalties on my recommendation. I conducted him to the count-duke, who received him very politely, and told him, "He had behaved so well in his government of the city of Valencia, that the king thinking him qualified to fill an higher place, had named him to the viceroyalty of Arragon. Besides (added he) that dignity is not above your birth, and the nobility of Arragon cannot murmur at the choice of the court."

His excellency made no mention of me, and the public never knew the part which I acted in this affair: a circumstance that saved Don Alphonso and the minister, a great many satirical remarks that people might have passed upon a viceroy of my making.

As soon as Don Cæsar's son was certain of the place, he dispatched an express to Valencia to inform his father and Serephina of his good fortune, and they soon came to Madrid: their first care was to find me, and overwhelm me with thanks. What a moving and glorious sight was it for me, to see myself embraced with eagerness by the three persons in the world whom I loved most! As sensible of my zeal and affection as of the honour which the post of viceroy did to their family, their expressions of gratitude to me as to one of their own rank; they seemed to were infinite: they even spoke to me
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have forgot that I was their servant; and thought they could never enough manifest their friendship. To suppress useless circumstances, Don Alphonso having received his letters patent, thanked the king and his minister; and having taken the usual oaths, set out with his family from Madrid, to go and fix his abode at Saragossa*, where he made his entrance with all possible magnificence: and the Arragonians shewed by their acclamations, that they were very well pleased with the viceroy whom I had set over them.

C H A P. XIII.

Gil Blas meets Don Gaston de Cogollos, and Don Andrea de Tordefillas, at the palace. The conclusion of the story of Don Gaston and Donna Helena de Galisteo. Santillane does an important piece of service to Tordefillas.

I Swam in joy for having so luckily changed a displaced governor into a viceroy; even the lords of Leyva were less pleased at it than I was. I soon had another opportunity of employing my credit for a friend; which I think I should relate, to persuade the reader that I was no longer the same Gil Blas, who sold the favours of the court, under the preceding ministry.

Being one day in the king's antichamber discoursing with noblemen, who, knowing my situation with the prime minister, did not disdain my conversation; I perceived in the croud Don Gaston de Cogollos,

* Saragossa, formerly Cæsarea Augusta, an ancient city upon the river Ebro, capital of the kingdom of Arragon. It has an archbishop, sovereign council, and is the seat of an university and inquisition,

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that state prisoner whom I had left in the tower of Segovia, and the keeper Don Andrea de Tordefillas along with him. I immediately quitted my company to go and embrace these two friends, whom if the were astonished to see me there, I was still more so to meet in that place. After some warm hugs on both sides, Don Gaston said to me, Signior de Santillane, we have a world of questions to ask mutually, and this is not a convenient place for that purpose: allow me to conduct you to a house, where Signior de Tordefillas and I will be glad to have a long conversation with you." I consented to this proposal; we squeezed through the croud, and going out of the palace, found Don Gaston's coach waiting for us in the street; we went into it all three, and were driven to the great market place, where the bull fights are performed, and there Cogollos lived in a very handsome house.

"Signior Gil Blas (said Don Andrea, when we were set in a hall magnificently furnished) at your departure from Segovia, you seemed to hate the court, and to be resolved to remove from it for ever."

"That was actually my design, (answered I) and so long as the late king lived, I did not change my sentiments; but when I understood that the prince his son was on the throne, I was willing to see if the new monarch would know me again; he did recollect me, and I had the good fortune to be favourably received; he himself recommended me to the prime-minister, who has conceived a friendship for me, and with whom I am in still greater favour than ever I was with the duke of Lerma. This, Signior Don Andrea, is what I had to tell you. Now, pray let me know if you are still keeper of the tower of Segovia?" "No, indeed, he replied, the count-duk has put another in my place, in all probability believing me wholly devoted to his predecessor." "And as for me, said Don Gaston, I was set at liberty for

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quite contrary reason. The prime-minister no sooner learned that I was imprisoned at Segovia, by the duke of Lerma's order, than he ordered me to be discharged; it now remains, Signior Gil Blas, to inform you of what has happened to me, since I have been enlarged.

The first thing I did, continued he, after having thanked Don Andrea for his kindness to me, during my confinement, was to repair to Madrid, and present myself before the count-duke d'Olivarez, who said to me, "Don't be afraid that the misfortune which hath happened to you will in the least prejudice your reputation: you are now fully justified: and I am the more convinced of your innocence, because the marquis of Villareal, whose accomplice you were suspected to be, was not guilty; for, though he is a Portuguese, and even related to the duke of Braganza, he is not so much in his interests as in those of the king my master. Your intimacy with that marquis is therefore no reproach upon you; and in order to repair the injustice which you suffered, in being accused of treason, the king has bestowed upon you a lieutenancy in the Spanish guards." "I accepted the commission, begging that his excellency would allow me, before I should enter upon my duty, to go to Coria, and visit my aunt Donna Eleonora de Laxarilla. The minister gave me leave for a month, and I set out accompanied by one lacquey only: we had already passed Calmedar, and were engaged in a hollow road, between two mountains, when we perceived a cavalier defending himself valiantly, against three men, who attacked him altogether. I did not hesitate, but rode to his succour, and put myself on his side. I observed while we fought, that our enemies were masked; and that we had to do with vigorous swordsmen; however, in spite of their strength and skill, we remained conquerors; for, I pierced

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one of the three, who fell from his horse, and the other two immediately betook themselves to flight. The victory, indeed, was not much less fatal to us than to the wretch whom I had killed; since after the action, my companion and I found ourselves dangerously wounded. But you may guess what was my surprise, when, in this cavalier, I recollected Combados, the husband of Donna Helena! He was no less astonished when he saw that I was his defender: "Ah Don Gaston! cried he, was it you then who came to my assistance! when you so generously espoused my cause, you little thought it was that of the man who deprived you of your mistress." "I was really ignorant of it, answered I, but had I known you, do you imagine that I should have scrupled to do what I have done? are you so much mistaken in me, as to think me so base?" "No, no, he replied, I have a better opinion of your virtue; and if I die of the wounds which I have received, I hope yours will not hinder you from profiting by my death." "Combados, said I, although I have not yet forgot Donna Helena, know, that I don't desire to enjoy her, at the expence of your life; I am even glad of having contributed towards saving you from the swords of three assassins, since in that I have performed an action agreeable to your wife." While we conversed in this manner, my lacquey alighted, and approaching the dead cavalier, took off his mask, and discovered features which Combados immediately knew. "It is Caprara! cried he, that perfidious cousin, who, out of spite for having been disappointed of a rich estate which he unjustly disputed with me, has a long time cherished the desire of murdering me, and at length, chosen this day to put it in execution; but heaven hath permitted him to fall a victim to his own design."

END of Vol. VII.

5 AP 66
Of the ADVENTURES of GIL BLAS.

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